

Inspection of a good school: Bridgemere CofE Primary School

Bridgemere Lane, Bridgemere, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7PX

Inspection date:

13 February 2024

Outcome

Bridgemere CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to belong to this caring school that is at the heart of the local community. They know that staff care for them well. Strong relationships with staff help pupils, including children in the early years, to feel settled in school. Pupils appreciate that there is a trusted adult who they can turn to if they have any worries or concerns.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils rise to meet these high standards. Typically, pupils achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils enjoy learning, and they behave well. Staff's consistent approach to managing behaviour helps pupils to demonstrate positive attitudes in lessons. Pupils develop strong friendships at school. Older pupils actively support younger pupils throughout the school day. For example, play leaders help younger pupils to try new sports and to play safely at lunchtime.

The school provides numerous enrichment opportunities for pupils to pursue their talents and interests, such as pickleball, gardening and a wide range of sporting activities. Pupils take great pride in representing their school in, for example, choral performances and in sports competitions.

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

The school has an ambitious and well-ordered curriculum. Pupils, including those with SEND, access a broad range of subjects. The school has carefully designed curriculum content so that pupils in mixed-age classes learn all that they should. The important knowledge that pupils should learn from the early years to the end of Year 6 has been clearly identified. The school has thoughtfully connected ideas and themes across different curriculum subjects. This helps pupils to deepen their understanding of broad concepts.

The school provides valuable curriculum guidance for teachers. This helps to build and enhance teachers' subject knowledge. There are clear expectations for how teachers should assess what pupils know and remember. In most subjects, this helps teachers to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum and to address any misconceptions or errors quickly.

In a small number of subjects, the school's assessment strategies are not tailored closely enough to the knowledge defined in the curriculum. On occasion, this can hinder teachers from identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge as swiftly as they could. From time to time, this means that some pupils do not secure the knowledge that is essential for subsequent learning in these subjects.

Reading is highly prominent across the curriculum. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. The recently developed school library is enticing and appealing. Books have been carefully selected to inspire pupils to read widely and often. Pupils especially enjoy reading to Charley the dog, who visits each week.

Staff are appropriately trained to deliver the phonics programme well. Children get off to a rapid start in learning to read when they join the Reception class. Skilled staff provide effective support for pupils who fall behind in the phonics programme so that they can catch up with their peers. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they already know. Pupils become confident and fluent readers in readiness for key stage 2.

Children learn to write well in the early years. Staff help children to learn to form their letters with precision. Children often practise writing the letters and words that they have learned in phonics lessons in a wide range of learning opportunities.

Pupils eagerly come to school each day, and attendance is high. When there are any slight dips in pupils' attendance, the schools acts quickly and effectively to ensure that pupils' attendance improves.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Staff ensure that these pupils have the support that they need to access the same curriculum as their peers. Appropriate external agencies work with pupils as required.

The school supports pupils' wider development well. Regular visits, trips and residential help pupils to thrive socially as well as academically. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities that enable them to act as positive role models who actively seek ways to help others. For instance, pupils enjoy being school councillors and book monitors.

Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the approachability of staff and the care afforded to their children. Parents appreciate opportunities to take part in reading workshops that help them to support their children's learning at home.

Governors work successfully with the school to make sure that staff are well supported in their roles. For instance, staff's workload and well-being are considered when any

changes are made to the quality of education that pupils receive. This helps staff to feel respected and valued. Staff are proud to work at the school, and morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school's strategies to assess pupils' learning are not matched to the knowledge in the curriculum carefully enough. On occasion, this can hinder teachers from checking that pupils have learned essential knowledge securely. The school should ensure that approaches to assessment in these remaining subjects enable teachers to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge swiftly and accurately.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

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

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| Unique reference number | 111343 |
| Local authority | Cheshire East |
| Inspection number | 10291409 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 86 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Elizabeth Ford |
| Headteacher | Caroline Middleton |
| Website | www.bridgemereschool.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 26 and 27 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Chester. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place by the end of 2026.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and chair of governors have been appointed.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The 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 early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered other subjects in the school's curriculum. They talked with the leaders of these subjects and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of school and talked with them about their views on behaviour and learning. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- 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 considered a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school development plan, records of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sandra Hamilton

Ofsted Inspector

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