

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Bridgewater Primary School

Bridgewater Street, Little Hulton, Manchester M38 9WD

---

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 May 2024

## **Outcome**

Bridgewater Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils thrive in this happy, nurturing school. Children in the early years, along with any new pupils across the school, are given a warm welcome. They settle into school life quickly. Relationships between adults and pupils are exceptionally strong. Pupils strive to live up to the school's motto, ensuring that each step they make in their learning 'makes a big difference.'

Pupils display exemplary behaviour throughout the school day. They are enthusiastic about the house points and 'star of the week' awards that they receive for following the school's 'golden rules.'

The school is extremely ambitious for its pupils. Pupils rise to the challenges that the school sets for them, both academically and socially. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve highly across the curriculum. By the time pupils leave Year 6, they are exceptionally well prepared for their move to secondary school.

Pupils are proud to be part of this special community. They spoke enthusiastically about the vast array of high-quality enrichment activities on offer. For example, pupils enjoy taking part in 'university' experiences such as woodwork, choir, cookery, lacrosse, and ukulele. Pupils are very proud of the success that the school's sports teams have enjoyed.

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

This is a school that is never complacent. Despite its many notable strengths, the school continually looks to further improve on its already exceptional offer to pupils. Much thought has gone into shaping a curriculum from the early years to Year 6 that meets pupils' needs and interests. The careful construction of the curriculum means that pupils continually build on their learning until they secure a deep body of knowledge across all subjects.

The school ensures that pupils with SEND are identified accurately and swiftly. Staff are united in their view that additional needs should not be a barrier to learning. When necessary, they skilfully adapt resources so that these pupils can learn the same curriculum as their classmates. The school engages with outside agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive expert support when it is needed.

The school provides pupils with learning that is engaging and exciting. Staff have considerable subject expertise. They regularly check to identify whether pupils have any missing knowledge. Teachers ensure that pupils have secure foundations in their learning before moving on to more difficult concepts. No opportunity is lost to improve learning for pupils. Pupils spoke about what they know already and their current learning with confidence and genuine interest.

Reading is at the heart of pupils' learning. The school places communication and language at the centre of children's learning in the early years. Children in the Nursery class are immersed in rhymes, songs, and stories. This helps them to build an understanding of new vocabulary and sounds quickly. Pupil reading ambassadors take their role in promoting a love of books and poems with their peers seriously. They spoke with pride of the book club sessions and assemblies they lead to support this initiative.

Well-trained staff expertly deliver phonics sessions across the early years and key stage 1. Staff build pupils' reading knowledge effectively with books that closely match the sounds that they know and understand. Pupils who struggle to read, including those who speak English as an additional language, benefit from well-matched additional support. This increases their confidence in reading. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, the vast majority are fluent readers.

From the start of the Nursery Year, children are taught to be polite and caring towards each other. They are well prepared for their next steps and develop confidence throughout their time at the school. Pupils in all year groups commit themselves to their learning. These positive, responsible attitudes contribute considerably to pupils' ability to learn and to achieve well.

Following the full return to school after the COVID-19 pandemic, the attendance rates of some pupils declined. The school has been swift to address this issue. It has prioritised identifying the specific reasons for pupils' absence. Staff work closely with individual families and take effective action to provide support for pupils with low attendance rates. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance are improving.

The school ensures that pupils benefit from a wealth of experiences, which helps to develop them into well-rounded citizens. Pupils work with the school council to support local hospices. They take part in litter picks within the community. Older pupils are proud to be prefects and role models for the younger pupils. The school has also prioritised the benefits of trips to broaden pupils' horizons, including visits to museums, safari parks and the beach.

Pupils are also taught the importance of looking after their mental health. Well-being ambassadors provide 'affirmation stations' across the school. Pupils described these as

places where messages are shared 'to make others smile'. They also spoke confidently about the importance of the 'positive post' classes receive which help pupils reflect on how unique and special they are.

Governors have a clear vision for the school. They provide effective support and challenge. Staff are proud to be part of the school team. They are appreciative of the careful consideration that is taken of their workload when changes are made to policies and the curriculum.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in October 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105912
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321288
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	438
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Rosie Mullen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Henderson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bridgewaterprimaryschool.co.uk">www.bridgewaterprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 October 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector spoke with subject leaders and some pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other school leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector talked with staff and leaders about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector met with the leaders responsible for behaviour, SEND provision and pupils' wider development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector spoke with pupils about their experiences at school. She looked at a range of policies and documents relating to pupils' welfare and education. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- The inspector met with parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024