

# Inspection of a good school: Bow Brickhill CofE VA Primary School

Station Road, Bow Brickhill, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK17 9JT

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Inspection dates:

18 June 2024

## Outcome

Bow Brickhill CofE VA Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils model the school's values, such as respect, responsibility and kindness, wonderfully. Pupils have exceptionally positive relationships with staff and each other. Older pupils thrive in their roles and responsibilities, such as school councillors, charity representatives and reading ambassadors. From the beginning of Reception, pupils help each other caringly in many aspects of school life. One pupil summarised the comments of others, saying, 'Our school is great because everybody is kind and welcoming.' Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. By the end of key stage 2, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.

Curriculum visits inspire pupils at the school. For example, pupils love the opportunity to visit Milton Keynes Museum and work as 'Victorians' as part of their history, learning, lighting fires and making bread enthusiastically. The school's thoughtful approach to wider development builds pupils' confidence and readiness for their next stage of education strongly. The school has a positive approach to supporting good attendance and punctuality. Clear procedures help the school to address any attendance issues from the first day of pupils' absence. Strong relationships between the school and community help to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. The school has identified the key knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn clearly. All subjects are sequenced well to help pupils build their knowledge cumulatively. In core subjects, such as mathematics, pupils strengthen their learning positively from the beginning of the early years. Staff create purposeful learning environments that support pupils' mathematical understanding. Staff help pupils to remember mathematical vocabulary and methods, which pupils apply confidently. In subjects such as art and design, pupils have increasingly secure knowledge and understanding. For example, when learning drawing and painting, pupils can talk about different styles and apply a range of techniques creatively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their individual needs identified quickly, with

appropriate resources and support put in place. However, the full curriculum is not implemented as effectively as it could be. Where this is weaker, some modelling and explanation of key concepts does not develop all pupils' learning as deeply as where practice is strongest. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could.

Pupils read well and have a love of books. A wide range of ambitious texts is at the heart of the school's curriculum and helps to link pupils' learning successfully. The school has focused on developing phonics teaching so that those at the earliest stages of reading progress within the curriculum steadily. Books and reading resources, such as phonics flash cards, are matched closely to the sounds that pupils have learned. Staff check what pupils have learned systematically, and then use appropriate strategies to help pupils improve. As a result, pupils achieve securely.

Pupils start strongly in Reception, where the school uses carefully planned lessons and creative learning opportunities well. Children engage in purposeful activities that inspire them. For example, one pupil wrote a message to the tooth fairy independently while another made an envelope, combining their work together and sharing real joy about their learning. Children talk confidently and play happily. In Reception, children maintain focus and attention, and by the end of the school year, they are ready for their next stage of education.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The school's behaviour policy is embedded and followed consistently. Pupils are polite and respectful. They hold doors open for one another and respond to clear routines in classrooms and when moving around the school. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Playtimes are happy and kind. Pupils are very clear in stating that bullying is not a part of school life, and they say that all pupils are included and cared for. There is almost no low-level disruption in lessons, and pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils know about democracy and elections. They can talk about voting and the processes they use to elect school councillors. Pupils learn how to debate challenging issues in balanced ways.

Governors know the school well. They are passionate about maintaining the school's caring ethos and striving for excellence in all that the school does. Governors offer systematic reviews, support and challenge methodically. Key governor roles and responsibilities are understood thoroughly. Staff feel very well supported with their workload. There is a very positive work environment where staff's well-being is taken seriously. The school engages with parents and carers positively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors take account of all of their statutory duties. Overall, there is an open and positive culture of safeguarding at the school, including safer recruitment processes. The school knows families well and all staff are aware of the signs of abuse. The school ensures that pupils and families get help if they need it. Staff receive appropriate training and the school revisits key safeguarding issues to ensure that staff keep their core safeguarding knowledge up to date. Pupils feel safe and have a very clear understanding

of how to keep themselves safe. This includes speaking to trusted adults when needed and being aware of the potential dangers of technology such as the risks of cyberbullying. However, the school's record-keeping systems are not as comprehensive as they could be. Although this does not put pupils at risk, strengthening these systems would improve the school's practice further.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's safeguarding record-keeping system does not always provide a comprehensive enough overview of concerns. Therefore, the oversight of safeguarding incidents could be more robust. Leaders should review record-keeping and ensure that systems used across the staff team follow safeguarding procedures precisely.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not implemented fully effectively, meaning that some pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. The school should continue to provide appropriate staff training and development to ensure that the full curriculum helps all pupils to achieve as highly as possible.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2014.

## **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>	134423
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321925
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	94
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mrs Suzanne Cook
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pam McBurnie
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bowbrickhillprimary.co.uk">www.bowbrickhillprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.
- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Oxford. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in March 2022.

## 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. Inspectors discussed the 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, the staff and the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative from the Diocese of Oxford, a representative of the local authority and other leaders within the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions that were conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

### **Inspection team**

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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