

Bridgemere CofE Primary School

Bridgemere Lane, Bridgemere, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7PX

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- After a period of instability, leaders and governors now provide clear direction for the school. This has led to improvement in all aspects of the school's work.
- Senior leaders have a positive influence on pupils' attainment and progress, which are now rapidly improving. They are ambitious for the school's further development.
- Safeguarding in the school is a strength. Pupils feel safe due to effective procedures. Staff are vigilant and receive regular safeguarding training.
- Pupils in all year groups enjoy reading. They read a wide range of books and make good progress.
- The school's detailed tracking information gives a clear indication of the progress pupils make. Consequently, leaders and governors identify any groups who fall behind.
- The small proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress.
- Leaders have developed the school's core values well. Pupils speak confidently of these and how they apply them to their lives.
- Middle leaders receive effective training to enable them to lead their subjects well. They use ongoing assessment well to improve pupils' attainment and progress.
- Pupils' conduct around school is good. They are polite and show respect to each other. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive.
- Learning in the early years is a strength. Adults' expectations are high and children achieve well.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching and the accuracy of assessment. Consequently, pupils make strong progress. However, there is still some legacy of underachievement, resulting in gaps in pupils' learning.
- As a result of the effective curriculum, pupils' knowledge in a range of subjects is good. However, pupils do not gain the necessary skills and knowledge they need in geography.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress to enable them to achieve at higher standards. This is because teachers do not always provide them with learning that is sufficiently challenging.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to strengthen the progress and attainment of pupils in key stage 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - planning work that is sufficiently challenging to enable a greater proportion of pupils to achieve the higher standards at the end of each key stage
 - developing the use of technical vocabulary and subject-specific skills in geography.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have steered the school through a challenging period of uncertainty. There has been much disruption in staffing in the recent past, particularly in leadership posts. This has had a negative impact on this small school but the situation is now settled. The improvements made, particularly in the past year, demonstrate leaders' capacity for improvement. Pupils' outcomes are improving rapidly.
- The executive headteacher and governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and of pupils' progress. Monitoring focuses on the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement.
- The school has been supported by a local trust to raise standards. The local authority has also provided effective support which has enabled leaders to concentrate on the school's priorities for improvement.
- Systems to check the performance of teachers are used to help them develop professionally and also to support the school in reaching its goals. Leaders have addressed weaker teaching and it is much improved.
- Pupils have previously underachieved in reading. Leaders have made improving pupils' outcomes in reading a priority and introduced new strategies, including daily sessions, to help pupils develop their fluency skills. Pupils' outcomes in reading are improving rapidly as a result.
- Leaders ensure that all staff follow the school's behaviour policy. This leads to a consistent approach to managing behaviour across the school. As a result, pupils, especially younger ones, demonstrate positive attitudes.
- Pupils' achievement is monitored closely. This enables leaders to have a strong understanding of any underperformance. Middle leaders are now aware of how to improve teaching and learning by using assessment information more effectively.
- School leaders have a good understanding of the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They ensure that teachers support pupils well. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- Support for the small number of disadvantaged pupils is effective. The school allocates the pupil premium funding in various ways. This includes additional learning in reading and writing. The pupil premium plan is assessed regularly to identify which strategies for improvement have the most positive and rapid impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders evaluate the impact of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium. This funding is used well to engage pupils in physical activities. The premium is used to provide sports coaching that has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to PE and ensures good-quality training for teachers. The school's performance in sporting competitions is also improving.
- Leaders ensure that there is an extensive extra-curricular programme for pupils. There are many clubs to enhance learning in sport, science and music.

- Parents and carers recognise the improvements that leaders have brought about to behaviour and learning, especially over the past year. The majority of parents and carers who spoke to inspectors or who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, are happy with the quality of education and care that their children receive.
- The wider curriculum provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils were able to discuss with the inspector how the school's Christian values, such as wisdom and resilience, help them in their learning. However, in geography, pupils do not always have the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in depth.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors meet their statutory duties, including their responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe in the school.
- Governors are knowledgeable and communicate their high aspirations for the school. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors conduct regular visits in order to improve their understanding of the school. These visits have a particular focus, such as safeguarding or provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This then enables them to evaluate the progress the school has made towards achieving its priorities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have revised all safeguarding arrangements to create a strong safeguarding culture. This includes significant changes to the school's physical environment. Safeguarding is now an important part of everyday life in the school.
- Any concerns about pupils' well-being are carefully recorded. Effective relationships with a wide range of external agencies are well established and ensure that pupils are kept safe and that their welfare needs are met.
- Appropriate checks are made on staff who work at the school. All staff receive relevant training in all aspects of safeguarding and, as a result, they are able to recognise possible signs of concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved rapidly, especially this year. Consequently, a greater proportion of current pupils make strong progress.
- Leaders demonstrate a capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning further. There is a consistent approach in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics which has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils in the majority of classes underpin successful teaching throughout the school. Teachers quickly intervene when necessary and provide verbal feedback to move pupils' learning on.

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan interesting lessons based on pupils' needs. Pupils try their best in all that is asked of them. For example, pupils persevered and used their mathematical skills and knowledge when solving complex problems involving equivalent fractions in lower key stage 2.
- The profile of reading is high in the school. Phonics is taught well and this has led to improving outcomes in the phonics screening check for pupils at the end of Year 1. Pupils use their skills well to tackle unfamiliar words. Older pupils read fluently and with good comprehension.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable role in supporting pupils' learning across the school. They use their subject knowledge carefully to prompt and question pupils, especially in mathematics. Teaching assistants enhance the support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Arrangements to assess pupils are effective. Staff use information about pupils' learning with increasing precision when deciding on the next steps in teaching.
- In the majority of subjects across the curriculum, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding as lessons build on previous learning. In geography, however, learning is sometimes not as effective as there are not as many opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding.
- Middle- and lower-attaining pupils' progress is strong across a range of subjects. However, teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve. Tasks presented to these pupils are not always well matched to their abilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils benefit from activities about safety. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of different situations, including when they are online and using mobile phone apps.
- Pupils are proud of the responsibilities that they take on, such as being 'ethos councillors', who promote the school's values in their daily work. Pupils told the inspector that they enjoy the opportunity to make a contribution to school life, such as helping to improve the marking and feedback codes in the school.
- Pupils are aware of the importance of keeping fit, eating healthily and being physically active. They are particularly well informed about mental health and well-being, and discussed how they share their worries if any arise.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that bullying is rare. They know how to respond should they have any worries and are confident that staff, and other pupils, will listen and take their concerns seriously.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves very well in class and around school. They respect one another, listen well and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Staff use the school's reward systems consistently and to good effect. As a result, pupils are motivated to behave well and low-level disruption is rare.
- Pupils value their education and attendance is above the national average for primary schools. The level of persistent absence is very low and school leaders swiftly follow up any absence with parents.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The small numbers of pupils taking national tests each year at both key stage 1 and key stage 2 need to be analysed and interpreted with caution, as one pupil represents a significant percentage of the whole cohort. Numbers vary widely from year to year. However, taking this into account, pupils have historically made insufficient progress, especially across key stage 2.
- Leaders have addressed historical issues. Pupils in key stage 2 are catching up. There are improvements in the attainment and progress of pupils across the school, as seen in pupils' books and in the school's assessment records. Actions taken by leaders are now embedded and are showing results. Progress is getting stronger and pupils' outcomes are improving towards being good.
- Many pupils are now making stronger progress and catching up quickly. However, there are still some gaps in pupils' learning, knowledge and skills. As a result, some pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Additionally, the most able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable due to the lack of challenge in some activities.
- Examples of pupils' learning in books, particularly in history, show acquisition of key skills and understanding. Specialist staff teaching music and PE also ensure strong progress in these subjects. However, inconsistencies in the quality of learning opportunities in geography mean that pupils' progress is not as strong as in other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy a strong start in the early years. The school's current assessment information shows that pupils make good progress in key stage 1. There is also a consistent approach to teaching early reading throughout the early years and Year 1. Despite this, the proportion of current pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is lower than in the past.
- Work in the books of pupils currently in key stage 2 shows that recent improvements to the quality of teaching are starting to have a positive impact on their progress. The work of younger pupils in key stage 2 is particularly promising.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of early identification of their needs and effective additional support. Leaders have identified

the ongoing barriers to learning which they face and put in place additional measures to promote rapid learning.

- The number of disadvantaged pupils is small. Therefore, to compare their outcomes with those of others nationally would be inappropriate. However, work in their books shows that this group of pupils make the progress that the school expects of them.
- Leaders have focused on reducing underachievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's most recent assessment information shows that pupils are now making much improved progress across a range of subjects. For example, their skills and knowledge in mathematics are improving quickly. Work in their books shows that pupils are developing fluency and application, acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills they need.
- In writing, pupils have opportunities to write for a range of audiences and for different purposes. They also develop a good handwriting style. They read with suitable levels of fluency, accuracy and confidence. As a result, their achievement in reading is also accelerating.

Early years provision

Good

- Strong leadership in the early years ensures that children have a good beginning to their school life. Good-quality learning throughout the early years means that children achieve well.
- The early years leader checks the quality of work and achievement with other schools and nurseries to verify the accuracy of the school's assessments. The number of children achieving a good level of development is improving.
- The standards achieved by children over time represent good progress. This is evident in their work and attitudes to learning. They are very comfortable with well-established routines. They share equipment and wait for their turn. Staff engage well with children to help accelerate their learning. For example, staff questioned children skilfully to develop their counting and listening skills to help them to solve repeated addition problems based on a 'superhero' theme.
- Learning journeys show children's strong progress and provide examples of children's learning and work. Parents contribute to the online learning record. This involvement in their children's learning has also been an important factor contributing to success.
- The early years staff assess children's progress and use this information to plan challenging learning opportunities, as well as giving children the scope to make their own choices. This was evident in the pupil-led activity of designing ramps, which developed independent learning skills.
- Children feel safe. They play with each other confidently. They listen to adults well when required and they talk to adults about their learning. Children display excellent manners towards each other when working together on the challenges they are given.
- Staff have opportunities to develop their own skills further and they are very aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding.

- Nurse provision is also strong. Children have opportunities to write, read and develop their knowledge of phonics in a way that is consistent with Reception children.

School details

Unique reference number	111343
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10045119

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Emily Verow
Executive Headteacher	Mrs Beverley Dolman
Telephone number	01270 520271
Website	www.bridgemereschool.co.uk
Email address	head@bridgemerece.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 February 2014

Information about this school

- Bridgemere is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- In 2017, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes in staffing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector conducted meetings with leaders to review the impact of their work to improve teaching and raise standards for pupils. He considered the school's current assessment information and conducted in-depth scrutinies of pupils' work to consider how well pupils learn and achieve over time.
- The inspector visited classes in every year group. These visits were conducted jointly with leaders.
- School documentation related to safeguarding and behaviour was scrutinised by the inspector. The inspector reviewed referrals made to leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, as well as those that leaders subsequently referred to external agencies.
- Records of risk assessments, behaviour logs and leaders' checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school were considered. The inspector also met with leaders to review the impact of their work to safeguard pupils' welfare and promote good behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector held a meeting with members of the governing body. A discussion was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils to discuss their views on the school. He also considered seven responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at playtimes.
- A group of pupils read to the inspector. He also heard pupils read during his visits to classrooms and talked with them about their attitudes to reading.
- The inspector met with staff to ascertain their views on the school. The inspector also considered six responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector gathered the views of parents, primarily through informal discussions on the playground before school. The 36 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, were also considered.

Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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