

Inspection of Bridge Hall Primary School

Cuddington Crescent, Bridge Hall, Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8LX

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at the school. They enjoy positive relationships with staff and behave well. They know that the school welcomes their views, including those of the elected 'head pupils'. This helps them to feel valued and included.

Pupils benefit from the school's recently improved supervision and organisation of activities at playtimes and lunchtimes. They behave sensibly in classrooms and outdoors. Helped by the school's improved curriculum, they are settled in lessons and enjoy learning.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to do well. However, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not benefit fully from the school's high expectations of their achievement. The quality of some of the curriculum in the early years is variable. In key stages 1 and 2, staff sometimes do not deliver the school's curriculum effectively. Pupils, including children in the early years, do not learn or remember some key information as well as they should.

Pupils gain from the well-considered opportunities that the school arranges for them to learn about the wider world. This includes many educational trips to special places. For example, pupils in Year 6 gained confidence in their own abilities through their stay at an adventure centre, after a ferry trip across the sea.

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

The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the learning, well-being and attendance of pupils. This and previous weaknesses in the curriculum have resulted in some pupils having gaps in their subject knowledge. For example, in 2023, pupils' attainment in Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average. This means that the school has not prepared some pupils well for the next stage in their education.

On the whole, the school, including governors, with help from the local authority, has established a sharp focus on its actions for improvement. It has established well-thought-out subject curriculums in key stages 1 and 2. Teachers act quickly to identify when children may have SEND and provide them with effective support. Pupils' achievement is improving. However, staff sometimes provide activities for pupils that do not help them to learn the curriculum well. This results in gaps in pupils' knowledge.

By and large, the school uses its curriculum well to assess pupils' knowledge. It uses assessment information efficiently to decide which concepts to introduce next. However, on occasion, staff do not help pupils enough to recap their previous learning. This makes it difficult for pupils to secure in their memory some of the important knowledge that they need for later learning.

The school has successfully strengthened its approach to phonics. Staff benefit from the expert advice and training that the school provides. They ensure that individual pupils who find reading difficult receive the help that they need. Pupils read with increasing skill and fluency.

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy discovering a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Staff inspire pupils with the work of different authors and different types of literature. Pupils' achievement in reading, including in Year 6, is starting to improve.

The school takes effective steps to inspire pupils about the world around them. It also helps pupils to learn ambitious new words with increasing success. However, lingering weaknesses in pupils' handwriting and knowledge of spelling and grammar hold back the quality of their written work. Some pupils do not develop enough fundamental skills in writing across different subjects.

Often, children and staff in the early years can be heard singing well-chosen songs and rhymes together or holding extended conversations. Children enjoy and benefit from their learning, including in the school's well-organised outdoor area. However, some of the school's early years curriculum does not identify clearly the knowledge that staff will teach and assess. Staff do not help children to acquire some of the knowledge that they need in readiness for key stage 1.

The school has taken resolute action to improve pupils' attendance. It works increasingly effectively with families to understand and resolve attendance issues. Pupils' attendance is improving.

The school takes positive action to support pupils' emotional and mental health as a way to enhance behaviour. Pupils feel that staff support them well. They listen and respond appropriately to staff's guidance and instructions. Low-level disruptions to lessons are rare and short-lived. Pupils can concentrate on their learning.

Pupils are well prepared for their lives as citizens of modern Britain. They have a particularly well-developed understanding of equality. For example, they understand some of the important contributions that people from different cultures and religions have made to human history and development.

Governors carry out their roles appropriately. For instance, they ensure that the school values the work of its staff and considers staff's workload and well-being when making policy decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff provide activities that do not help pupils in key stages 1 and 2 to learn the school's curriculum effectively. This variability holds back some pupils' learning. The school should ensure that all staff have the support and training that they need to implement the curriculum consistently well.
- On occasion, staff do not recap previous learning enough with pupils to help them to remember important concepts. This makes it difficult for pupils to build new learning on their previous knowledge. The school should make sure that staff help pupils to establish knowledge securely in their long-term memory.
- The quality of pupils' spelling, letter formation and use of punctuation varies. This affects their ability to communicate in writing across the curriculum. The school should refine its work in this area so that pupils write with skill and fluency.
- In some of the curriculum in the early years, the key information that children should know is unclear. This makes it difficult for staff to understand which key concepts to introduce, explain and check that children remember. The school should identify with greater clarity the foundational knowledge that staff in the early years will teach and assess.

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	106032
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10348003
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Trafford
Headteacher	Alexandra Jamieson
Website	www.bridgehall.stockport.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- At the time of this inspection, the headteacher was absent. The deputy headteacher was leading the school as acting headteacher.

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 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 completed deep dives in these subjects: art and design, early reading and mathematics. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited some lessons, spoke with staff, spoke with some pupils about

their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.

- Inspectors also considered information about some other subjects, including samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including some of those on its website.
- Inspectors spoke with the school about SEND, early years, behaviour and attendance and its provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, including pupils with SEND. They also spoke with pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes and as they moved around the school. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents and considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their work at the school. They reviewed the responses from staff to Ofsted's survey.
- The lead inspector met with the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also considered information about the work of governors.
- Inspectors spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- 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.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Hulse

Ofsted Inspector

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