School report

Inspection of Bridlewood Primary School

Chartwell Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SN25 2EX

Inspection dates:	17 and 18 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Staff create 'a place for learning, caring, sharing and growing together', as the school motto says. Pupils at this school love learning. Leaders plan carefully for pupils' personal development that goes beyond the curriculum. Staff and pupils say it helps to bring their classroom learning to life. For example, on a recent educational visit, Year 4 pupils learned important knowledge about life as a Viking. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the enrichment activities on offer.

Staff and pupils follow the school values of respect, responsibility and honesty. These begin in the early years, where staff help children to share, take turns and listen to each other. Pupils are happy, polite and well-behaved. They are kind and caring. Staff ensure pupils know the difference between bullying and falling out. Pupils are confident that if bullying should happen, staff will sort it out. Pupils feel safe in school.

Pupils take on roles of responsibility with great pride, for example as house captains, school councillors or eco-councillors. They are given opportunities to represent their school. Pupils take part in local sporting events and music concerts. Parents say that their children are proud to attend their school.

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

Children in the early years get off to a flying start. The curriculum is sequenced and structured well. Staff use the carefully planned learning environment to support children's early development successfully. Staff skilfully prepare children well for writing. They help children to extend their choice of words and to develop physical skills. For example, children can roll, cut and shape play dough to make worms and snails, inspired by a class story.

Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning effectively. They use assessment information to help teachers improve the quality of education. For example, leaders rightly introduced a new phonics programme in September 2021. Staff have received appropriate training to deliver phonics. Leaders continue to support staff, so their phonics knowledge is secure.

Each phonics session follows the same structure. This helps staff to check pupils' phonic knowledge and spot those who need help. Pupils who need additional help are supported effectively with extra practice. The letters and sounds in the pupils' reading books match the phonics pupils are taught. Staff help pupils to develop their reading speed and accuracy well.

Class books are selected carefully by teachers to interest and engage pupils in reading. Online theatre productions and author visits encourage pupils to develop a love of reading. These also reinforce important messages to help pupils in their learning. For example, a recent author workshop helped pupils to understand the importance of not giving up when they find learning tricky.

In mathematics, teachers expect pupils to answer a range of questions to show they can apply their mathematical knowledge, problem-solving and reasoning. However, some pupils do not always get to these questions. This limits their opportunities to practise and master problem-solving and reasoning skills, vocabulary and knowledge. There are plans in place to rectify this.

Subject leaders have identified the key concepts they want pupils to know and remember. Most subject leaders have correctly identified gaps in pupils' knowledge caused by disruptions to learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they have assessed that pupils cannot remember their previous geographical knowledge. This makes it difficult for pupils to build new skills and knowledge in geography. Where subject leaders have identified gaps, they support teachers to use their subject knowledge to plan appropriate learning to help pupils to recall what they have learned. However, leaders are aware that this work needs to be completed consistently across all curriculum subjects to ensure gaps in pupils' knowledge do not grow.

Leaders and staff work closely to correctly identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work effectively with external agencies to check that the right support is in place. Pupils with SEND are supported well.

The school has a calm and orderly environment. There are clear routines and expectations for pupils' behaviour. They work and play well together. Pupils know how to be physically and mentally healthy. For example, pupils run around the school track to keep fit. Leaders spot quickly if pupils need additional help to understand and manage their feelings.

Leaders think carefully about how to improve education for all. Governors share the ambitions of school leaders. Staff appreciate the support and consideration shown for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff help pupils to know how to keep themselves safe. This includes online safety.

Leaders carry out the necessary safeguarding checks before staff begin working at the school. Safeguarding records are checked regularly by an external consultant and governors.

Staff and governors attend up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff know how to report concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders follow up concerns raised by staff swiftly. They try to secure appropriate support for pupils and their families. Leaders are not afraid to escalate concerns with external agencies if they believe the support offered could be improved.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have not identified gaps in pupils' knowledge in some subjects. Pupils cannot, therefore, build on prior knowledge. Subject leaders need to identify and rectify these gaps to ensure pupils know more and remember more.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not consistent across year groups and the wider curriculum. This makes it difficult for teachers to help pupils to close gaps in their knowledge effectively. Leaders need to ensure teachers have a consistently strong subject knowledge across all subject areas.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	134134
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10200969
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	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emma Kilby
Headteacher	Vicky Sammon
Website	www.bridlewoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were in post at the time of the last inspection in January 2018.
- New members of the governing body have been appointed since the previous inspection, including a new chair of governors.
- Since the last inspection, five new teachers have been appointed.
- The school does not use alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and took this into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils, governors, including the chair of the local governing board, and a performance adviser from Swindon Borough Council.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and art. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including records of safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. She considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. The inspector spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding practices.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. She also took into consideration the responses to the surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Marie Thomas, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Wendy Hanrahan	Ofsted Inspector

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