

Inspection of an outstanding school: Bitterne Manor Primary School

Quayside Road, Bitterne Manor, Southampton, Hampshire SO18 1DP

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils are safe, happy and well cared for. They are proud of their school and its inclusive practice. Pupils work hard, with support from staff, to ensure that everyone is quickly made to feel welcome and understands the values of the school.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils. The school's motto, 'Learning to be the best we can', is reflected in every aspect of school life. Teachers and support staff work together to help every pupil to achieve. Pupils behave well in lessons. They are motivated to work hard because they enjoy their lessons and take pride in their achievements. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly around the school because they know that this keeps everyone safe. Leaders deal with any incidents of behaviour that fall short of these high standards, including any bullying, swiftly and effectively.

When asked, pupils list dozens of things they appreciate about their school. They especially like the way that everyone is valued for who they are. Pupils know that their opinions matter. They feel empowered when they work with staff to make changes. Pupils also enjoy the inviting and well-stocked library, where they love to read.

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

The planned curriculum is ambitious and reflects the breadth of the national curriculum. Leaders have identified the subject knowledge that pupils need to know, starting from the early years, across the full range of subjects taught. Lessons are well sequenced to build on previous learning. In mathematics, for example, children in Reception learn about and practise counting. This helps deepen children's understanding of numbers to 10 and beyond. They are well prepared to use and apply their understanding of number as they learn to add and subtract in key stage 1. Similarly, older pupils practise their times tables to enable more efficient calculation.

Teachers have expert understanding of the individual parts of the reading curriculum. For example, in phonics lessons, they pronounce letters and sounds accurately. Teachers know the common mistakes that children might make and know how to help them to learn well. Staff select reading books which are precisely matched to the sounds pupils know. They inspire children to read. A love of reading is evident throughout the school. Interesting discussion about reading arises in almost every lesson. As a result, pupils meet the ambitious aims of the curriculum and successfully develop reading fluency and comprehension.

Staff quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that these pupils access the same learning as their peers, where appropriate. Although staff provide some help and support, this is not always as effective as leaders intend. Teachers are not sufficiently well trained to enable them to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils.

Staff closely monitor children's progress in reading and mathematics. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. Those at risk of falling behind are given extra help and practice to help them catch up. In other subjects, leaders are in the process of ensuring that all teachers understand all of the small steps of learning in the new curriculum. This is not yet embedded. Teachers do not always carefully check whether pupils have remembered key knowledge and skills. Sometimes, teachers assume that pupils are ready to progress when they are not.

Standards of behaviour are high. Pupils play well together and are kind to each other. Clear behaviour rules mean pupils know what is expected by staff, and they rise to these high expectations. As a result, a calm and purposeful atmosphere is evident in all lessons.

Pupils' wider development is high on leaders' agenda. Pupil voice is an integral part of the school ethos. Pupils appreciate the roles of responsibility they have been given, for example as leaders of learning and as prefects. Pupils show their care and concern for their community by collecting food for local food banks. Leaders make sure that pupils learn about the importance of staying healthy and safe. This includes safety by the sea and when using the internet.

Governors know the school's strengths and next steps. They are ambitious for pupils' academic and personal success. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel strongly supported by leaders in managing their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding is evident throughout the school. They regularly provide information to families about keeping children safe. All staff receive training which helps them to quickly identify pupils who may need help. Leaders are tenacious in making sure that pupils and families get the help they need. They work closely with external agencies so that issues are well managed.

Leaders adapt the curriculum to address concerns that arise. For example, the programme for personal, social and health education has helped to manage some friendship issues among some older pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not always sure how secure pupils are in their understanding of key knowledge in the foundation subjects. Consequently, pupils do not always have the depth of knowledge that leaders intend. Leaders should make sure that staff assess what pupils know and remember carefully and use the information to plan future learning effectively.
- Staff do not always consider how best to teach each subject so that pupils with SEND can access the learning. This means that some pupils do not easily secure new ideas and knowledge. Leaders should help and support staff to know how they can adapt learning appropriately to support all pupils effectively.

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 June 2016.

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](#)' 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	116089
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10227118
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hannah Craggs
Headteacher	Mike Adams
Website	www.bitternemanor.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has recently taken over the management of the on-site pre-school. This has been incorporated into the school's early years provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, two governors, including the chair, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to pupils about their learning. The inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record, reviewed safeguarding records and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector considered how well the school manages safer recruitment, and how it manages allegations about adults. The inspector also discussed safeguarding with those responsible for governance and with the local authority.
- The inspector considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including any free-text responses. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Clare Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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