

Inspection of Bitterne Park Primary School – Part of the Learning Federation Partnership of Schools

Manor Farm Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton, Hampshire SO18 1NX

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Bitterne Park Primary School. They enjoy learning and achieve highly because of the very ambitious curriculum which is expertly taught. Staff form strong relationships with pupils. Pupils know that if they have any concerns, there is always an adult who will help. This helps them to feel safe.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They learn how to communicate well and how to follow clear and consistent routines, right from when they join in the early years. Pupils are polite and friendly, and increasingly independent. Pupils enjoy helping each other and making sure that everyone is included. 'Sanctuary ambassadors' welcome newcomers to the school, because they want everyone to feel happy and safe.

Pupils strive eagerly to embody the school's vision for children to be 'architects of a better world'. They think carefully about how they can make a real and meaningful difference in their school, community and the wider world. Pupils passionately take on local causes, such as campaigning to improve the quality of the water in the local river.

Pupils benefit from participating in a range of well-considered clubs, trips and community activities. Singing club is especially popular, as are days when the whole school and their families join together for a day of gardening.

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

The school has established a highly ambitious, broad curriculum. The school's clear vision underpins the curriculum. Themes of sanctuary and ecology thread through pupils' learning seamlessly. Consequently, pupils are enthused by what they learn. They are eager to make a real difference in society and to become 'architects of a better world'.

The curriculum is structured extremely carefully to make sure that pupils build their knowledge securely from when they start in the early years until they leave at the end of Year 6. As a result, pupils achieve exceptionally well across subjects, as reflected in published outcomes in 2024.

A sharp focus on communication, language and numeracy ensures that children in the early years develop very strong foundations for future learning. In particular, the school's approach to learning phonics is superb. Children quickly learn to read fluently and are very well prepared for key stage 1. Any pupil that needs additional support with reading receives targeted extra help.

Teaching is of high quality. Teachers are exceptionally well trained in the curriculum and how to teach it. This includes several teachers who are at the start of their careers. Teaching is consistent across the school. This helps pupils' learning develop strongly over time. Teachers know precisely what individual pupils have previously learned and what they need to learn next. Well-embedded processes ensure that the school quickly identifies the needs of vulnerable pupils, including pupils with special educational needs

and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff expertly adapt learning to meet these pupils' needs. Staff are rightly proud to work at the school.

The school's vision for developing pupils' character is exceptional. The school makes sure that pupils, including the most disadvantaged, have the opportunity to participate in society in a meaningful way. The uptake of extra-curricular activities is high, including trips to the theatre and opera and whole-school shows. Visits from local authors are well received. Opportunities for pupils to take on leadership responsibilities are extensive and of high quality. Pupils are proud of having roles such as eco-warriors and school councillors. Through all this, pupils hone their social skills and develop a very strong sense of character. They actively make a significant difference to the school and local community.

Leaders and staff have a strong sense of moral purpose. The school is passionate about working in partnership with its community. There are many ways for parents and carers to get involved in school life, including by visiting to see what pupils are learning. The school sensitively looks out for the needs of the most vulnerable pupils, including helping families to access additional help and support when they need it. In particular, the school helps to address any barriers that might prevent any pupils from coming to school more frequently in a thoughtful and caring way. Consequently, pupils are eager to come to school and enjoy everything that it has to offer. Pupils attend regularly and very few are persistently absent.

The school is extremely well led. Executive leaders who work across the federation are highly skilled. They make sure that staff are very well supported in all aspects of their work. Those responsible for governance are adept at challenging leaders to make sure that the school provides a high-quality education for all.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	116090
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10341404
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	630
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gavin Sumpter
Headteacher	Gerida Montague (Executive Headteacher) Caroline Firman (Co-Headteacher)
Website	www.bppsive.net
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school works in partnership with five other schools across Hampshire and Southampton. An executive board of senior leaders, led by an overall executive headteacher, work across these schools.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with members of the executive team, senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body, known as the local leadership board, including the chair. Some of these local governors are also part of the federation board, including the chair of the federation board.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, communication and language, history, design technology and science. Inspectors spoke to subject specialists, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. An inspector heard pupils read to an adult from the school. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the school's safer recruitment checks; 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies and information about governance.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and around the school. Inspectors considered how the school is supporting pupils' personal development. They spoke to pupils about their views and experiences.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff expressed in Ofsted's online surveys. Inspectors also spoke to staff in meetings and around the school site.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Katherine Russell	Ofsted Inspector
Justin Bartlett	Ofsted Inspector
Vickie Farrow	Ofsted Inspector

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