

Inspection of Birley Spa Primary Academy

Jermyn Crescent, Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S12 4QE

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The executive headteacher of this school is Melany Pemberton, and the head of school is Cathy Gibson. This school is part of L.E.A.D. Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Diana Owen, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Buck.

What is it like to attend this school?

Birley Spa Primary Academy is a positive and supportive place to learn. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other and bullying is rare. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They work, and play, happily together. Most pupils behave well and enjoy school. In some lessons, there are incidents of behaviour that can disrupt learning. Pupils trust adults to deal with any incidents of misbehaviour quickly. The school has strategies in place to continue to improve behaviour and attitudes.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being. Pupils learn how to understand and manage their emotions. Pupils become confident and resilient. This work begins right from the start of school. Children in the early years quickly settle into expected routines. Children in Reception show positive attitudes to their learning.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils take full advantage of the wide range of activities on offer at the school. These activities include visiting an orchestra, going on residential trips and working with a yoga therapist.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. However, in some subjects, pupils do not learn key concepts as securely as they need to. Leaders at all levels are taking the correct actions to move the school forward. The school is in the middle of reviewing its curriculum and how it is delivered. The impact of this work is beginning to be seen.

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

The school has a well-considered curriculum. In most subjects, the school has given careful thought to the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. In these subjects, the learning is well organised. Pupils build securely on what they know already. However, in some subjects, the school does not make clear what knowledge is essential for pupils to have before they move on to new learning. In these subjects, lesson activities do not match the planned learning as precisely as they could. As a result, some pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not learn as well as they should. In most lessons, staff are quick to identify and address any misunderstandings pupils may have. However, these checks are not done routinely, or well, in all subjects.

Pupils with SEND are fully involved in all aspects of school life. The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND well. There is effective support for pupils with SEND, including in the early years.

The school prioritises the teaching of reading from the early years to Year 6. Pupils, and children in the early years, read widely and often. Pupils enjoy being read to by their class teachers. The school has a clear phonics programme in place. Pupils practise their reading using books that closely match the sounds that they have

learned. Those pupils who struggle to keep up in reading receive extra help from staff. Most pupils quickly become fluent readers.

The school's early years provision gives children a strong start to their time in school. The development of children's language and communication is a high priority. Mathematics is well planned. Children in the early years learn numbers, and numerical patterns, quickly. They recognise and recall number facts well. Children enjoy using the indoor and outdoor spaces. They become curious and independent learners.

The school promotes its core values, including teamwork and resilience, consistently well. Pupils are motivated by the school's house system. They enjoy the contribution they make to the school's weekly assemblies. There is a well-organised personal, social and health education programme. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including when they are online. They understand the importance of well-being. Pupils learn how to resolve problems and overcome challenges. They are tolerant of, and respectful to, others. Pupils embrace different ideas and cultures. It matters to pupils that everyone should feel included in their community. Pupils learn how to be leaders. For example, some pupils act as safeguarding ambassadors and 'eco leaders'.

The school involves parents and carers in school events. For example, the school offers parents reading workshops and coffee mornings. Parents are supportive of the school and their children's education.

Trust and school leaders work with a shared purpose and vision. Governors and trustees make frequent visits to school. They monitor school information robustly. Governors and trustees have a clear view of the school's performance. They know what needs to continue to improve. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff feel valued. They appreciate the support they get from leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The medium-term plans for some subjects in the wider curriculum do not define precisely what children should know. Therefore, teachers do not always teach what is intended. This means that pupils do not have the knowledge needed to access new learning and can miss some key learning of concepts. The school needs to provide teachers with more detail about the precise knowledge they want pupils to know and remember.
- In some lessons, opportunities for checking what pupils know and can do are sometimes missed. This means that pupils' misconceptions are not always

rectified both at the point of learning and after. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to check pupils' understanding systematically in lessons and use this information to quickly address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge.

- There is some inconsistency in how the behaviour policy is applied across the school. As a result, some low-level behaviours are not always addressed as quickly as they should be. The school should ensure that there are consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour in all classes so that pupils across the school behave well in all lessons.

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	143965
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10290322
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	349
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Buck
CEO of the trust	Diana Owen
Headteacher	Melany Pemberton
Website	www.birleyspaacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the L.E.A.D Academy Trust.
- The school has an integrated resource provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (nine key stage 2 pupils).
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils about the quality of education and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and during social times.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other senior staff from the school and trust during the course of this inspection.
- Inspectors also met with several groups of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school. This included a wide range of policies, the school's self-evaluation and published information about pupils' performance.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for overseeing the support for pupils with SEND. They spoke to pupils with SEND about their experiences. Inspectors also considered the impact of the support for pupils with SEND in lesson visits and when reviewing pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff survey and pupil survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Rachael Macleod, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Becky Austwick	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Bentley	Ofsted Inspector

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