

# Bridgewater Park Primary School

**Address:** Plantation Close, WA7 2LW

**Unique reference number (URN):** 140612

## Inspection report: 6 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	●
Urgent improvement	

### ✔ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

#### **How we evaluate safeguarding**

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

## Strong standard ●

### Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have an unwavering passion to ensure that every child is included. This relentless approach ensures that pupils who face difficulties thrive. Staff know their pupils well and understand any barriers they may face to their learning and emotional wellbeing. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and monitored carefully through clear systems. Leaders undertake a detailed analysis of each pupil's individual needs and starting points. They act on this information with precision. Pupils' tailored programmes are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are having the intended impact, which they typically do.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and develop expertise in supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff deploy strategies that prioritise pupils' welfare alongside their academic progress. They draw on links with families and specialist professionals. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers and are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

Leaders use additional funding to address disadvantage. For example, pupils access free breakfast club, which reduces absence and ensures readiness to learn. Leaders, including governors and trustees, have a sharp eye on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They routinely evaluate the impact of initiatives to ensure strategies make a positive difference to pupils' progress.

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## Expected standard ●

### Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Leaders have established a 'family feel' community where pupils flourish. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders take swift action when pupils do not attend regularly. They work closely with families to identify any barriers or support they need to make improvements. As a result, there have been demonstrable improvements in reducing absence rates for individual pupils, particularly for more vulnerable pupils.

Pupils behave well in the classroom and during unstructured times. They demonstrate interest in their learning. Leaders have established a school culture based on kindness and respect. Pupils demonstrate high levels of care and consideration for each other. Bullying does happen, but it is well managed. Pupils know adults in school will take action when behaviours are not appropriate, including the use of offensive language.

Staff are clear about how they expect pupils to behave. They use rewards that pupils relish, such as their 'golden award' stickers. Pupils value the relationships they have with adults, which contribute to their positive responses. Staff, who know them well, treat them fairly and consistently. Leaders make adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or

disabilities, who benefit from more bespoke approaches. Pupils manage their emotions appropriately, and this contributes to the calm and orderly school environment.

## Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders set a curriculum that focuses on helping pupils fill gaps in their knowledge and build skills over time. They take into account the mixed-aged classes and ensure that pupils secure the basics in reading, writing and mathematics early on. Leaders typically identify when pupils fall behind in these subjects and put support in place so that they catch up quickly. They recognise where the curriculum needs further refinement so that pupils secure the essential knowledge and vocabulary they need to be fully ready for the next stage of their learning.

Overall, teachers have the subject expertise to deliver lessons well. They use modelling and repetition to help pupils organise their thinking. Teachers make regular checks on what pupils know and can do and use this to plan further opportunities for pupils to secure learning. Leaders consistently check the quality of teaching across the school to ensure high standards. They provide ongoing training so teachers continue to develop.

Staff identify where pupils need extra help, particularly those who face barriers to learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff make appropriate adaptations, such as providing additional support and visual prompts. This enables pupils to access the same ambitious curriculum.

## Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a well-considered curriculum for Nursery- and Reception-age children. Staff deliver it well and build children's skills effectively. They plan purposeful activities to help children experience a range of learning opportunities, both within the classroom and the outdoor area. Staff have secure knowledge of each child. They use this and their checks on learning to expertly consider what children need to know and do next to make progress. Staff interact insightfully with children and model important vocabulary. Most children use this in different areas of learning, with increasing confidence. Overall, children achieve well.

Staff start phonics teaching promptly in the Reception Year. They prioritise learning to read and developing a love of rhymes and stories. Children learn the sounds and letters needed to become more confident in reading. They consolidate their learning through daily practice across the school day. Staff provide targeted support to help children who need extra help. As a result, most children become fluent readers who are well prepared for Year 1 and beyond.

Staff build trusting relationships with families. They closely collaborate with parents, carers and professionals to identify children's additional needs early. Relationships between adults and children are consistently warm and caring. This creates a strong sense of security and belonging.

## Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including governors and trustees, know the school well. They have a clear understanding of its strengths and the areas that need further development. Leaders regularly review what is working and what needs to improve. They prioritise actions carefully so that they have the greatest impact on pupils. Leaders work closely with the trust and external partners to strengthen practice and ensure that pupils benefit from further school developments.

Leaders and governors make decisions that are firmly rooted in the best interests of pupils. This is especially true for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those who face other barriers to learning and wellbeing. As a result, the school's inclusive culture continues to strengthen. Pupils now attend school more regularly and learn more effectively, showing the impact of ongoing changes that leaders bring about.

Governors are knowledgeable and proactive. They meet their statutory duties well and have an accurate understanding of the school. They manage resources responsibly and hold leaders to account through effective challenge. This helps leaders to focus on what matters most and to secure sustained improvement.

Leaders ensure that all staff, including early career teachers, have access to high-quality, evidence-informed professional development programmes that build expertise over time. They make sure that staff are well supported and feel valued. Leaders also consider staff's wellbeing and workload thoughtfully when making decisions. As a result, staff feel a strong sense of purpose and take pride in being part of a happy school that puts pupils at its heart.

## Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school has a well-sequenced programme to support pupils' personal development and emotional wellbeing. Staff encourage discussion and debate in lessons, which pupils say helps them to fully reflect on their learning. They give pupils a safe space to share their views and develop an understanding of cultural diversity beyond their community. Pupils learn to value others and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Pastoral systems are responsive and well embedded. Pupils say staff teach them to manage worries and resolve problems. They value the help they receive and describe staff as caring and approachable.

The curriculum extends beyond lessons to enrichment opportunities. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities, including trips linked to the curriculum. For example, they visit local theatres and the zoo. Pupils enjoy attending clubs that help them develop their talents and interests, such as various sports clubs, arts and crafts, which are open to everyone. Pupils say trips and clubs help them experience things they would not usually experience.

Pupils practise democracy through school elections. They explain why having a voice in their school matters to them. Pupils take on roles such as wellbeing ambassadors and junior safety officers. These groups are well represented by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other vulnerabilities. The eco-council takes part in litter picking and plants spring bulbs in the local area. These experiences help pupils deepen their sense of citizenship.

The relationships and sex education and health education curriculum is well considered. Leaders work closely with parents and carers to make sure sensitive topics, such as puberty, are handled appropriately. Pupils speak about online safety and making healthy choices in different situations with confidence. They learn about future careers through enterprise activities and partnerships with local organisations. Pupils leave well prepared for life beyond their school.

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## Needs attention

### Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils do not consistently achieve well. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' achievement in mathematics is weaker than the progress they make in reading and writing. These patterns have remained over time. Leaders are taking action to address this. However, many pupils do not have the secure knowledge and skills they need for secondary school.

In some subjects and year groups, disadvantaged pupils achieve better than similar pupils nationally. Recent improvements in how well their youngest learners perform in early years and phonics demonstrate leaders' capacity to improve outcomes for pupils.

In pupils' books, handwriting is often poor. Incorrect letter formation and limited fluency can, at times, hinder their written communication. Some pupils can recall knowledge, vocabulary and skills from their year group curriculum. However, this is not consistent across all subjects. As a result, some pupils are not well prepared for the next stage in education.

## What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils at Bridgewater Park thrive in the safe haven that leaders create for them. They enter school happily and are greeted by staff who know them well and are pleased to see them. Due to recent improvements, most pupils now attend school more regularly. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe in their school. They understand how the school teaches them about risks, such as anti-social behaviour and mobile phone use.

Pupils belong to a school that highly values positive relationships. They behave well and enjoy receiving praise for making the right choices. Pupils demonstrate kindness and acceptance. They recognise that others may be different from them and understand the importance of being treated fairly. In lessons, pupils try their best and enjoy the daily routines of learning. Pupils say that bullying can happen. They are clear about how to report it and say that trusted adults take swift action.

Pupils benefit from a curriculum that sets high expectations. Many rise to the challenge and achieve well. However, for some older pupils, gaps in what they know and remember from previous learning prevent them from achieving well in national curriculum tests. Pupils who need extra help, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, experience success through the tailored support they receive. They make secure progress across the curriculum from their starting points.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop, beyond their lessons. Pupils understand how to keep mentally and emotionally healthy. They value highly the pastoral support the school provides. Many pupils take on roles such as serving on the school council or acting as anti-bullying ambassadors. They learn to take responsibility and make changes for their school. For example, the school council organises a yearly toy sale to raise much-needed funds for the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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## Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work on raising standards of attainment in mathematics for all pupils, so that these are as high as those in reading and writing.
  - Leaders should embed a clear and explicit teaching of handwriting from the early years onwards to ensure that pupils are able to accurately form letters correctly and that their writing is both fluent and legible.
  - Leaders should continue to further streamline their curriculum content to identify core learning points and key vocabulary to enable pupils to retain and recall the essential knowledge and skills across all subjects.
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## About this inspection

This school is part of The Heath Family Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), David Donnelly, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Gundersen.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by his Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the members of the governing body, trustees and the CEO. They met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead and other school leaders.

Inspectors spoke with several pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not use alternative provision.

There has been a change in leadership since the previous inspection.

Headteacher: Mrs Ashleigh Hudson

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### Lead inspector:

Emily Morris, His Majesty's Inspector

### Team inspectors:

Sue Dymond, His Majesty's Inspector

Louise Finlay, Ofsted Inspector

## Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 6 January 2026

# School and pupil context

## Total pupils

**93**

Well below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

## School capacity

**140**

Below average

### What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

## Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

**62.22%**

Well above average

### What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

## Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

**5.38%**

Above average

### What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

### **Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support**

**22.58%**

Well above average

#### **What does this mean?**

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

### **Location deprivation**

**Well above average**

#### **What does this mean?**

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

### **Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)**

**No resourced provision**

#### **What does this mean?**

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

### **All pupils' performance**

#### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	45%	61%	Below

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>2024/25</b>	42%	62%	Below
<b>2023/24</b>	60%	61%	Close to average
<b>2022/23</b>	36%	60%	Below

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	70%	74%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	67%	75%	Below
<b>2023/24</b>	70%	74%	Close to average
<b>2022/23</b>	73%	73%	Close to average

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

<b>Year</b>	<b>This school</b>	<b>National average</b>	<b>Compared with national average</b>
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	70%	72%	Close to average
<b>2024/25</b>	67%	72%	Close to average
<b>2023/24</b>	70%	72%	Close to average
<b>2022/23</b>	73%	71%	Close to average

### **Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics**

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	52%	73%	Below
2024/25	42%	74%	Below
2023/24	70%	73%	Close to average
2022/23	45%	73%	Below

## Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	43%	46%	Close to average
2024/25	40%	47%	Close to average
2023/24	63%	46%	Above
2022/23	30%	44%	Below

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	71%	62%	Above
2024/25	70%	63%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	75%	62%	Above
2022/23	70%	60%	Close to average

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	68%	59%	Above
2024/25	70%	59%	Close to average
2023/24	63%	58%	Close to average
2022/23	70%	58%	Close to average

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	46%	60%	Below
2024/25	40%	61%	Below
2023/24	63%	59%	Close to average
2022/23	40%	59%	Below

### Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

## Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	43%	68%	-25 pp
2024/25	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24	63%	67%	-5 pp
2022/23	30%	66%	-36 pp

## Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	71%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25	70%	81%	-11 pp
2023/24	75%	80%	-5 pp
2022/23	70%	78%	-8 pp

## Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	68%	78%	-10 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	70%	78%	-8 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	63%	78%	-15 pp
<b>2022/23</b>	70%	77%	-7 pp

### Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
<b>Latest 3 year average</b>	46%	80%	-33 pp
<b>2024/25</b>	40%	81%	-41 pp
<b>2023/24</b>	63%	79%	-17 pp
<b>2022/23</b>	40%	79%	-39 pp

### Absence

#### Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
<b>2024/25 (2 terms)</b>	8.2%	5.2%	Above
<b>2023/24</b>	7.5%	5.5%	Above
<b>2022/23</b>	11.0%	5.9%	Above

## Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	22.5%	13.3%	Above
2023/24	27.9%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	46.2%	16.2%	Above

## Our grades explained

### Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

### Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

### Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

### Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

### Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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