

Bridgtown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124067
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380792
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Derek Aitken

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alex Gribbin
Headteacher	Joanne Raybould
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2009
School address	North Street Bridgtown WS11 0AZ
Telephone number	01543 510201
Fax number	01543 510202
Email address	office@bridgtown.staffs.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	25–26 January 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Derek Aitken

Additional inspector

Christopher Webb

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 14 lessons taught by 13 teachers. A scrutiny of pupils' work in English was carried out. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents, including policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils, self-evaluation records and assessment information. The inspectors analysed responses to questionnaires from 52 parents and carers, 100 pupils and nine staff.

Information about the school

Bridgtown Primary is an average-sized primary school. A very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is above average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage through one part-time Nursery class and two Reception classes. The school's awards include the International Schools Award. It also has Healthy Schools status.

In 2011 the school failed to meet the government current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

- Pupils make insufficient progress from their starting points in Nursery and by the end of Year 6 their attainment is low. No pupil in the current Year 6 class is working at the higher Level 5 in either English or mathematics. The low attendance of a significant proportion of pupils has a negative impact on their achievement.
- Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Their progress is improving due to actions taken since the last inspection.
- Despite some good elements, teaching is inadequate because it does not sustain satisfactory or better progress for pupils as they move through the school. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan to meet the needs of all groups of pupils effectively. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and not enough use is made of personal targets to raise pupils' aspirations and enable them to achieve the next level.
- A significant weakness of the inadequate curriculum is that pupils do not have enough good opportunities to reinforce and extend their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are satisfactory. A few pupils display extremely challenging behaviour. Appropriate procedures and strategies are employed to manage these pupils and minimise disruption. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are satisfactory and, in a few instances, good.
- Some recent initiatives have been successful in raising pupils' cultural awareness.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. While there is evidence of positive

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impact in a few areas of the school's work, two key areas identified for improvement in the last report have not been remedied. The work of the school is not evaluated rigorously enough to inform strategic planning. Targets for pupils are too low. The role of the governing body in holding leaders to account for pupils' academic achievement is underdeveloped.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring that teachers make good use of assessment information to plan lessons that are effective in meeting the needs of all groups of pupils
 - making better use of marking and pupils' personal targets to raise aspirations and guide pupils in their learning
 - increasing the range of opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the impact of actions rigorously to inform strategic planning
 - developing the ability of the governing body to hold leaders firmly to account for pupils' levels of attainment and progress
 - setting realistic and challenging targets for pupils that raise expectations for their performance.

- Renew efforts to work purposefully with parents and carers to improve punctuality and to raise pupils' attendance to at least the national average by April 2013.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement by the end of year 6 is inadequate. Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is well below what is typical for their age, especially with regard to their speaking and social skills. They make sound progress, particularly in numeracy, but there are still significant gaps in their skills in all areas of learning when they join Year 1. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are satisfied with their children's achievement. However, several responses expressed concerns and these are confirmed by inspection evidence. Last year, pupils' attainment in Year 2 was low and these pupils made slow progress. There has been a small improvement in rates of progress for pupils currently in Key Stage 1, including pupils with disabilities or special educational needs. This is reflected in pupils' attainment in reading which has edged upwards, but remains below average. More-able pupils read fluently and confidently. Less-able pupils demonstrate correct techniques in sounding out words, but occasionally stumble when attempting to articulate letter

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combinations in unfamiliar words. In Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading is low. Pupils with disabilities and pupils with special educational needs sometimes make satisfactory or better progress when they are taught separately as a smaller group. For example, in Year 6, these pupils quickly mastered a sequence of spelling patterns through solving clues linked to their topic on World War Two.

Pupils' attainment in each year group in Key Stage 2 is low, although it is a little higher in mathematics in Year 5. An over-reliance on worksheets diminishes opportunities for pupils to practise the skills of writing at length, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Pupils respond well when faced with challenging tasks, matched to their capabilities. Progress slows when pupils are not stretched in their learning, which is more frequently the case in classes containing pupils of different ages or where the range of ability is wide. Pupils have limited opportunities to practise their skills, especially in writing, in other subjects. Pupils' low levels of attainment, attendance and punctuality do not prepare them well enough for their future lives.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is not good enough to enable pupils to close the gap on the levels expected for pupils nationally as they move through the school. Good examples of teaching are too isolated to have a significant influence on pupil's achievement. Children in Nursery benefit from lively, open-ended questioning, which prompts them to add detail to their answers and moves their learning on. Similarly, in Year 2 the teacher demonstrated calculation strategies effectively to enable her pupils to use their counting sticks accurately to answer a series of questions. On a few occasions in the classes of younger children, teachers had to work hard to foster individual pupils' readiness for learning or deal with troubled pupils, which slowed the pace of the lesson. Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire held favourable views about the quality of teaching.

Teachers' planning is frequently not well matched to pupils' individual needs, and provides too little stimulus for their learning. More-able pupils are not challenged well enough to reach higher levels, including in English and mathematics. Pupils with disabilities and pupils with special educational needs are identified in lesson plans, but specific strategies for their support are usually lacking. This reduces the effectiveness of the contribution of teaching assistants to the learning of these pupils. Teachers' marking sometimes provides pupils with guidance as to how they can improve, but this is more evident in end-of-unit assessments than in pupils' daily work. Marking is often restricted to brief comments of praise or summarises what pupils have completed. Pupils have targets in their books but these are not used productively to support their learning or promote their progress.

Teachers' expectations for pupils' behaviour promote a settled atmosphere for learning in the classroom and topics such as 'Robin Hood' enable pupils to reflect on the importance of friendship and fairness. Such features support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils enjoy school and relate well to each other and the staff, both in the classroom and outside at play. Children behave well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but their social skills and capacity to work without guidance are still well below average when they join Year 1. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils' attitudes towards their learning are satisfactory, but are better when teachers' expectations for their progress are higher. While some pupils are responsive to the teachers' questioning, others are less confident and content to listen passively.

Very few questionnaire responses from parents and carers expressed concerns regarding pupils' safety. The comments related to community issues rather than concerns about the school. The perimeter of the school is adequately secure; internal security of the school buildings is controlled well by a single access point, key systems and correctly applied signing-in systems. Informal and formal discussions with pupils confirmed that they feel safe in school. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of factors which might endanger their personal safety. The school has developed some useful initiatives such as play rangers and peer supporters to strengthen pupils' sense of well-being. Some of the questionnaires reflected worries about pupils' behaviour. No evidence of disruptive behaviour was noted during the inspection. A close examination of the school's records indicates that there are some instances of poor behaviour. These are largely confined to a very small number of pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. The school has appropriate procedures for recording, investigating and reporting these incidents and makes good use of external support to provide staff with the skills and confidence to manage the behaviour of these pupils. Pupils say that any worries they have or incidents of bullying are effectively dealt with by staff. The attendance rate is low, although there was a small improvement last year. Several pupils are regularly late for school.

Leadership and management

While leaders are aware of key strengths and weaknesses, systems for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing performance are not sufficiently developed to inform purposeful strategic leadership. School leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to secure sustained improvement in provision and pupils' achievements. The school's development plan is weak. A suitable range of lesson observations is undertaken and several have been focused on addressing underperformance in teaching. Not enough attention has been paid to reconciling the findings of lesson observations with other evidence of pupils' progress or developing the quality of teaching across the school as a whole. In the past, assessments of pupils' attainment in Year 2 have been insecure. This has hampered the school's capacity both to set accurate benchmarks for measuring pupils' progress across Key Stage 2 and to make suitable adaptations to the curriculum to address weaknesses. The curriculum is inadequate; however, some useful small-group interventions have been put in place recently to support disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs. Although improvements have been made to assessment systems, targets for Year 6 pupils are too low.

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Leaders have tackled a few areas of weakness well. For example, improvements have been made to the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although these are not yet fully reflected in children's outcomes.

The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. Pupils' cultural horizons have widened through the establishment of useful links with the local community and internationally, for example Ghana. In other respects the curriculum is inadequate because it does not enable pupils to acquire and reinforce basic skills at an appropriate rate.

The governing body ensures statutory requirements are met but their procedures for checking and promoting pupils' academic performance are weak. Consequently, the governing body is not fulfilling its key role of holding leaders to account for pupils' achievements and teachers' performance. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equalities and tackles discrimination is inadequate because outcomes are inadequate for all groups of pupils and gaps between their achievements and those of primary pupils nationally are not closing. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and provide no cause for concern regarding children's safety.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bridgtown Primary School, Bridgtown WS11 0AZ

I would like to thank you for your help when the inspection team visited your school recently and for sharing your views with us. Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a satisfactory start. You know how to stay safe and most of you behave in a kindly way to each other and the staff. However, your school is not providing all of you with a satisfactory education and it needs extra support in order to do so. For this reason we have decided that the school needs 'special measures'. Your attainment is low in English and mathematics in Year 6 and by the time you move up to secondary school, many of you have not made enough progress in your learning.

To help the school improve quickly so that you all achieve as well as you should do we have asked the senior leaders and teachers to:

- improve lesson planning to make sure all of you get challenging work to help you learn better
- make better use of marking and your personal targets to provide you with good quality support to improve your work
- give you better chances to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
- set you more challenging targets to aim for
- improve the school's plans to provide a better standard of education
- make sure that the governing body keeps a close check on how well you are achieving
- work with your parents and carers to make sure all of you come to school on time and attend very regularly.

Other inspectors will visit the school in the near future to check how well these areas for improvement are being tackled. You can all help by coming to school every day (unless you are ill) and by working as hard as you can to improve your literacy and numeracy skills.

Yours sincerely

Derek Aitken
Lead inspector

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