

County Bridge Primary School

Anson Road, Bentley, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 0DH

Inspection dates

7–8 December 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- County Bridge Primary is an improving school. The headteacher, leaders and staff are passionate about providing pupils with an excellent education. As a result, the quality of teaching, the early years provision and pupils' achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across the school. Teachers and other adults share the leaders' ambition for pupils to 'develop lively and enquiring minds'. As a result, pupils do well across a range of subjects, particularly in mathematics.
- A large majority of pupils make good progress from their respective starting points. This is because leaders and staff focus on the progress of all, including disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils work hard in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils are polite, cooperative and behave well around the school.
- The school's arrangements to make sure pupils are safe and secure and know how to stay safe are good. As a result, pupils feel safe at school.
- Children who attend the Nursery and Reception classes benefit from a welcoming learning environment and effective teaching. Children make good progress and teachers prepare them well for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils demonstrate respect for other people's faiths, beliefs and values. They understand the difference between right and wrong and most of the pupils respect the school's rules and expectations.
- Governors know the school well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have a wide range of knowledge and expertise that make them effective in supporting and holding leaders to account.
- A minority of recently appointed middle leaders and staff are still adjusting to the school's practices and high expectations. As a consequence, some of the actions leaders have taken to improve teaching, learning and assessment and some aspects of the early years provision have yet to show sufficient impact.
- A small minority of pupils do not make the progress expected of them in reading.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop and embed a culture of high expectations so that all groups of pupils make outstanding progress in all subjects by making sure that:
 - teachers' assessment of what pupils know and can do is used to plan appropriate and relevant learning activities
 - teachers' feedback helps pupils to improve their work and deepen their understanding, particularly in reading
 - middle-ability disadvantaged pupils have the skills to read confidently and to understand what they have read
 - all pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop the skills necessary to read unfamiliar texts fluently and confidently and can explain what they have read.
- Further strengthen leadership and management by making sure that:
 - all middle leaders across the school have the knowledge and expertise to raise standards in the quality of learning, teaching and assessment and pupils' outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides strong strategic leadership. Since joining the school she has been relentless in driving improvement. She swiftly and successfully addressed the issues that were identified during the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors have taken effective steps to eliminate weaker teaching. Having recognised that more needed to be done to secure pupils' progress, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have devised effective assessment systems and identified ways for teachers to improve their planning and classroom practice. This has led to more consistently good teaching across the school.
- Leaders and governors have clear strategies in place to make sure that long-term improvements can be sustained. Since the previous inspection they have appointed new staff, including middle leaders. Leaders support staff well through effective training and appraisal.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a culture of high expectations. All members of the school community share and support this ethos. As a result, pupils are well aware that they are expected to work hard, behave well and show respect to adults and each other. The school is calm and purposeful as leaders and staff successfully promote a very positive climate for learning and socialising.
- The large majority of leaders at all levels pay close attention to the progress of each individual pupil. They are aware of their accountability for improving pupils' achievement and hold teachers rigorously to account for delivering the best possible outcomes for pupils. For example, they systematically monitor teaching and learning to track pupils' progress. This approach allows them to analyse the reasons for any lack of achievement and to intervene quickly. As a result, progress for all groups of pupils in the school is improving. However, a few middle leaders new to their post do not consistently use effective strategies that help to rapidly improve the standards in the areas for which they are responsible.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders collaborate effectively with neighbouring schools within the local authority. This collaborative work allows leaders to develop their skills by sharing effective practice with other school leaders and validate their judgements on the quality of teaching and learning through external moderation of assessments and pupils' work.
- The school's curriculum engages pupils' interest and raises their aspirations through a 'themed' approach. For example, pupils develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge in art, history, geography, music, technology, physical education and religious education through a range of stimulating and varied activities. Many memorable experiences sustain pupils' interest in learning. Pupils learn French throughout the school.
- A wide range of enrichment activities that include engaging trips and visits supports the curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils visited local museums, as well as Llandudno modern art gallery, and Year 4 pupils spent a day with the town's orchestra. In addition, visiting speakers give talks and lead discussions on a range of topics and

issues. Pupils in key stage 2 participate in a residential visit to an outdoor education centre. Books related to the themes pupils study, suitable for each age group, are available in every classroom for pupils to do their own research during lessons. As a result, pupils have the opportunity to learn from both people with specialist knowledge and experiences and books that explore the topics they study.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can achieve as well as others in the school and participate fully in all aspects of school life. In order to promote the progress of disadvantaged pupils the school deploys skilled learning assistants who help them keep up with other pupils in the school. Leaders and governors monitor effectively the impact that any additional provision has on the development and well-being of each individual child for whom they use the funding. However, middle-ability disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress expected in reading.
- Leaders use the primary school physical education and sport premium funding effectively to increase the range of sporting opportunities available to pupils. After-school clubs, including cricket, dance and football, are available every week and are very popular with pupils. Pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 have swimming lessons at a local pool. The school uses the funding to purchase equipment and games for pupils to enjoy physical activities during lunchtimes. Sports coaches provide training to staff. This has resulted in teachers' confidence in teaching physical education improving. As a result, an increasing number of pupils are developing their physical fitness and participating regularly in a range of sports as well as in local sporting competitions.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils demonstrate the skills necessary to become responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society. For example, the very large majority of pupils are considerate, thoughtful and respectful to others.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is getting stronger. After a review of governance was undertaken in 2015, the governing body was re-organised. Governors now have a wide range of relevant skills which allow them to bring a high level of expertise to their role. As a result, they challenge leaders rigorously about the school's performance, scrutinising information about attendance, behaviour, teaching and progress. They accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors have a clear understanding of assessment information and they check the progress of different groups of pupils. They ensure that the management of leaders' and teachers' performance is thorough and that there are clear and rigorous links between performance and pay progression. They also contribute effectively to the financial management of the school, including monitoring the impact that the spending of the pupil premium and sport premium has on the outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems are in place to ensure that the safeguarding of pupils is a high priority. The checks on staff's suitability to work with children are thorough and up to date. Staff training is relevant and frequent. Current government guidance informs the school's safeguarding and child protection policies. Staff understand and implement the

policies effectively. Staff quickly identify and support potentially vulnerable pupils and their families. Good links with outside agencies and parents are in place. Staff follow up issues effectively to make sure pupils' needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is now good in all year groups, resulting in pupils doing well in a range of subjects. Teachers have high expectations of pupils that promote good learning and progress.
- The very large majority of teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan and teach lessons that interest and engage pupils. Well-planned activities develop pupils' understanding and skills. As a result, pupils develop their skills and knowledge in a way they enjoy, and this helps them to develop positive attitudes to learning. For example, in English, effective teaching develops pupils' understanding of sentence structures through studying and writing entertaining stories. In mathematics, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to develop their understanding of arithmetic and geometry through solving real-life problems. However, a few teachers do not consistently use the information they have about what pupils know and can do to plan lessons that make sure pupils make outstanding progress.
- The teaching of phonics has improved significantly since the previous inspection. This is due to improved staff training and the consistent use of a whole-school approach to reading. From the time they start school in the Nursery and Reception classes, children are taught how to recognise sounds and how to blend them to build words. Teachers consistently and successfully encourage pupils to use their phonics knowledge in all reading and writing activities.
- Learning across the curriculum is organised in themes that develop pupils' knowledge in a range of subjects in a coherent way. Teachers ensure that pupils apply and develop their literacy skills throughout the range of subjects they study and their numeracy skills where it is appropriate.
- Classrooms are bright and attractive places that promote and celebrate learning and achievement. Displays on the walls provide good prompts to help pupils with the subjects they study. Examples of successful pupils' work also feature on display boards. Teachers use computerised teaching boards and computers effectively to deliver their lessons and to support pupils' learning.
- The teaching of reading is mostly effective. Teachers actively encourage pupils to become regular readers. All classrooms include inviting and comfortable reading areas. Leaders have purchased a wide range of reading materials to engage the interest of all pupils, including those who are reluctant readers. As a result, the large majority of pupils have well-developed reading skills. However, the middle-ability disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress expected of them in reading. In addition, a few pupils in Year 1 and 2 need further practice to develop their confidence when reading unfamiliar texts.
- The school has introduced a new system to assess pupils' progress matched to the expectations of what they should be able to do at different ages in all subjects. Teachers meet with their school colleagues and with colleagues from other schools to

ensure that their assessments are accurate and consistent. Teachers regularly evaluate the progress of the pupils in their class and report on this to senior leaders.

- Teaching assistants work very well alongside teachers to support groups and individual pupils. They receive appropriate training and have a clear understanding of what their role is in lessons. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly with disadvantaged pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Almost all teachers plan and teach activities that suit the different range of abilities within their classes, including the most able pupils. However, a few teachers do not consistently use the information they have about what pupils know and can do to plan lessons that make sure pupils make outstanding progress.
- The large majority of teachers apply the school's marking and assessment policy consistently. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and identify errors in written work and mathematics. They use questioning well to probe pupils' understanding and adjust the questions to the different abilities. However, teachers' written and verbal feedback does not always help pupils to improve their work or deepen their understanding, particularly in reading. As a result, there are occasions when pupils miss the opportunity to improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is a very caring environment where all pupils are valued. The welfare and development of pupils are at the heart of the school's work. Staff promote pupils' personal, social and emotional development positively. As a result, pupils are proud of their school and respond readily to the values and ethos that leaders have developed. Pupils wear their uniform with pride and take care of the school's buildings and resources. The vast majority of pupils are polite, cooperative and well mannered.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility for the school community. Staff take pupils' views seriously. The growing importance and influence of the school council illustrates this well. Pupils readily take on additional responsibilities; for example they are very keen to become playground leaders, helping others to organise activities during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils demonstrate respect for the views of others. They understand the importance of democracy, the rule of law and the role played by different public institutions such as the police force and fire and rescue service.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Staff teach pupils how to identify risks and hazards and potentially unsafe situations. They have a good awareness of how to keep safe in a range of situations, both at school and in their daily life outside school. For example, they understand the risks associated with the use of the internet or social media.

- Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying. Pupils told inspectors that teachers deal quickly and effectively with any incidents of bullying or misbehaviour.
- Most of the parents who spoke to inspectors or who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say that they are satisfied with the care and support the school provides for their child and that their child is happy in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour was judged as good at the previous inspection. Leaders have shown no complacency and have worked hard to sustain and improve the standards of behaviour in the school. Senior leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school's behaviour policies are clear and unambiguous and applied consistently by staff. As a result, pupils fully understand how they and others should behave. They are clear about the consequences for unacceptable behaviour and of not respecting the school's rules. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they appreciate the rewards they get for good behaviour.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at breaktime and lunchtime and around the school. The large majority of pupils take their learning seriously and have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well. Information provided by the school confirms that pupils' behaviour is good over time.
- Pupils' attendance is improving and is in line with the national average. The school has robust procedures in place to make sure that all groups of pupils come to school regularly. Leaders are taking effective action to make sure that parents of pupils new to the school are fully aware of the consequences of their children failing to attend school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection as a result of the improvements in the quality of learning, teaching and assessment. From their different and sometimes low starting points, pupils across all year groups make good progress in all subjects but particularly in mathematics. Pupils at County Bridge Primary School are equipped to succeed in the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' attainment in phonics has improved over the last two years and is now above the national figure in Year 1. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment in phonics was above the national figure for other pupils in Year 1. Information provided by the school shows that pupils continue to make good progress in phonics throughout key stage 1.
- The 2016 unvalidated external information shows that pupils are achieving well at key stage 1, not only in phonics, but also in reading, writing and mathematics. Information provided by the school shows that pupils currently in key stage 1 continue to make good progress in all subjects. The percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding age-related expectations continues to improve. However, a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 have difficulty reading material that is unfamiliar to them.

- Pupils in key stage 2 make good progress from their respective starting points. The results of the 2015 national tests for Year 6 pupils showed that progress was above national averages in all subjects. The 2016 unvalidated information shows continued improvement in attainment and progress in writing and mathematics, but lower than expected attainment and progress in reading. Leaders and governors have identified the issues that led to this relatively poor performance and are addressing them vigorously. Assessment information for pupils currently at the school and a scrutiny of pupils' work show that the large majority of pupils are achieving levels that are in line with, or above, those expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2015, disadvantaged pupils were making progress that was in line with other pupils nationally at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. Disadvantaged pupils represent a majority of the pupils who attend the school. Current progress information shows that the progress and achievement of these pupils continue to improve in line with those of others. The school monitors closely the progress of different groups and ensures that resources for disadvantaged pupils have a positive impact on outcomes. However, middle-ability disadvantaged pupils do not do as well as they should in reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. In 2016, this group of pupils made similar progress to others in the school in reading and writing. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did better than their classmates in mathematics. Actions taken by the school to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continue to have a positive impact on their achievements.
- The proportion of pupils attending the school who speak English as an additional language is relatively small. Staff support this group of pupils effectively. As a result, they make good progress. Leaders are anticipating the need to provide support for larger numbers of pupils with various degrees of fluency in English and there are support structures in place for these pupils to ensure that they make good progress.
- Historically, the most able pupils were not achieving as much as they should have done. Leaders are clear about the need for the most able pupils to be strongly supported, both in lessons and through enrichment activities. Leaders are also taking action to address the needs of the most able pupils who are disadvantaged and ensure that these pupils have access to a range of additional support to enable them to fulfil their potential. From their starting points, the most able pupils make similar progress to other pupils in the school. Current assessment information shows that this group of pupils are broadly on track to reach the standards expected by the end of each key stage.

Early years provision

Good

- The new early years leader is developing an accurate and in-depth knowledge of the early years provision. She tracks individual children's development rigorously and makes sure that the information on children's progress is accurate. Parents were positive about the arrangements for the children to start school. From the outset, staff and parents share information that helps children to settle quickly into the school's well-established routines. When children join the Reception Year, parents are actively encouraged to be involved and staff invite parents to attend a range of workshops. These events are very well attended.

- A significant proportion of children start the Nursery and Reception Years with skills that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking, reading and writing. Early literacy and mathematics skills are taught well. As a result, children make good progress by the time they leave Reception and are well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has improved over the last two years and is now above national figures. There is no real difference between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and others.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is good. Children learn a range of literacy and numeracy skills through activities that they initiate themselves or adults lead. Staff ask effective questions and engage children in discussions that develop children's communication and language skills and vocabulary.
- Children's behaviour is good. Staff develop children's social skills well. For example, children wait for their turn to use toys and share materials willingly with other children. They use the equipment in the various areas of the classrooms and outdoor areas appropriately and engage willingly in activities that teachers prepare for them.
- Leaders have improved the outdoor areas considerably since the previous inspection. The area now offers a purposeful and well-equipped environment for the children to develop their learning and social skills.
- Safeguarding is effective and the provision meets statutory requirements. As a result, children flourish in a safe environment and fully enjoy their first experience of school.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is effective. Staff support children to develop their writing skills and use their knowledge of phonics to make accurate attempts at writing words well.

School details

Unique reference number	104189
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10020015

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roy Duckers
Headteacher	Rabia Patel
Telephone number	01922 720 718
Website	http://www.countybridge.walsall.sch.uk
Email address	postbox@countybridge.walsall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- County Bridge Primary School is smaller than the average primary school.
- The early years provision comprises: a Nursery class for two-year-old children who attend part time in the afternoon; a Nursery class for three-year-old children, who all attend part time in the morning; and a Reception class for four-year-olds who attend full time.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, supported by the pupil premium funding, is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 20 lessons. They also made a number of short visits to lessons. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to lower-ability pupils and the most able pupils read. They met two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime, and at the start and end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records related to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance; records of how teaching is managed; and the school's own self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader and five middle leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. There was also a meeting with a representative from the local authority who works with the school.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day and took into account 11 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 24 members of staff who responded to the questionnaire.

Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Ogden

Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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