

# Bridgtown Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124067
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328042
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Don Mason

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	304
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alexandra Gribbin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Raybould
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	North Street Bridgtown Cannock WS11 0AZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 510201
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 510202

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 May 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Almost all pupils in this larger than average school come from White British families. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is for children in Nursery and Reception. The deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2008 and the headteacher took up her post in January of this year.

The Safe and Sound Club, which is run separately from the school by an outside provider, shares the site and was inspected separately from the school.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The decline in standards seen in recent years has been arrested. With strong support from the local authority, the school has made significant improvements recently in leadership and management, teaching and learning and systems for checking pupils' progress. These developments, together with the strong leadership of the new headteacher, are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and standards and provide evidence of the school's good capacity for further improvement. Parents express strong support for the school, making comments such as, 'I have seen a great improvement in the school recently, in its appearance and in the attitude of the children. I feel the school is improving week by week.' Pupils, too, speak positively about the school. They feel secure because of the good pastoral care they receive from the adults in school. Their personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Their strong social and moral development is reflected in their improved behaviour, which is good, and the positive attitudes they display in class. Through the new school council and activities such as planting up public spaces, pupils make an effective contribution to the community.

Children's skill levels when they enter the Nursery are below those typically found for their age. Current standards at the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement and is an improvement from the position two years ago when standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 were well below average. The introduction of an effective system for checking pupils' progress has contributed to this. Senior staff talk to class teachers about the progress made by their pupils each term. Individual pupils in danger of falling behind are identified and provided with appropriate support. The deputy headteacher produces summary information regularly, which assists senior staff and others to check the rate of progress throughout the school. This information, particularly for standards on entry to the Nursery, is not routinely available in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is improving because teachers know more about their pupils' abilities and are using the information to match work to their learning needs. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory overall because there is too much variation from one lesson to another. More able pupils make no better than satisfactory progress because the work set for them is not always challenging enough. When it is, pupils do not always have sufficient time to work on their activities because the teacher spends too much time talking to the whole class. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers because of the good support they receive. The curriculum is making a stronger contribution to pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and is satisfactory overall. The academic guidance provided for pupils is satisfactory, as is the overall care, guidance and support they receive.

The new headteacher is very clear about what improvements are required to move the school forward and how to bring them about. She is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and a senior leadership team that is growing in confidence and expertise. Staff are positive about the future and determined to raise standards and promote pupils' personal development and well-being further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children settle quickly in this caring, supportive environment. They behave well, take turns and play happily together. A good balance exists between activities led by adults and those that

children choose for themselves. Children make most progress when they work with an adult because of the good discussion and questioning that takes place. The learning potential of some of the free-choice activities is limited, which restricts the children's progress. On these occasions, the children sometimes flit from one activity to another because they are not excited or engaged by what is provided. Sometimes the opposite is true, as when reception children made a large 100 square from individual, numbered carpet tiles. The excited children made good gains in their learning and responded well when the teacher intervened to ask a question or pose a challenge.

The school recognises the need to improve the overall quality of the learning environment, especially the outdoor provision for children in Reception. The recent refurbishment of the Nursery marks the beginning of this work. Children enjoy activities in the newly set up 'sensory room', designed to stimulate their curiosity and speaking and listening skills. Leadership is satisfactory. Staff routinely check the achievements of the children but the information gained is not always used well enough in planning to ensure that the activities provided meet their learning needs. The school does not have a clear enough picture of attainment on entry to the Nursery and their progress through to the end of Reception to enable senior staff to check that all children make the progress they should from their individual starting points.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teaching to ensure that pupils make good progress in all lessons.
- Make full use of assessment information to ensure that the work matches the learning needs of more-able pupils more closely.
- Formulate a clear, summary picture of children's attainment on entry to Nursery and their progress to the end of Reception to assist senior staff and governors to evaluate progress throughout the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The national test results in Year 6 declined steadily between 2004 and 2007 when they were well below average. In 2008, standards improved and were average. This improvement was the result of strong teaching in Years 5 and 6 and a much greater focus on pupils who were in danger of underachieving. However, this improvement does not reflect the general picture in the school as not all pupils make as much progress as they should, for example the more able. Standards overall are below average. Nevertheless, the 2008 test results show that the decline in standards has been halted. There is clear evidence to indicate that the improvement is sustainable. The introduction of a robust system to check pupils' progress has been crucial in bringing about this positive change. Groups of pupils now achieve equally well because those in danger of falling behind are identified early and provided with appropriate support.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Parents and pupils agree that new procedures to manage behaviour have brought about a significant improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitudes. A small number who exhibit

challenging behaviour receive good support and are encouraged to take responsibility for their own conduct. Attendance, which was inadequate at the time of the last inspection, is satisfactory. Good attendance is celebrated and any absence rigorously followed up. Pupils generally enjoy their time in school, although in some less interesting lessons they are cooperative rather than engaged. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall, with strong features in their social and moral awareness. Pupils' understanding of the world beyond their school and local community and of the cultural diversity of the society in which they live is limited. The work of the relatively new school council helps pupils to feel that their views are valued and enables them to make a positive contribution to school life. Pupils have a sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe and to lead healthy lifestyles, for example through their participation in a wide range of sporting activities and new initiatives such as the vegetable plots. Average standards in the basic skills and the pupils' growing levels of self-confidence and self-esteem ensure that their preparation for the next stage of their education is satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is improving, with the result that pupils' progress is accelerating. Pupils respond particularly well when they are provided with practical or problem-solving activities. For example, pupils in a Year 5 mathematics lesson thoroughly enjoyed discussing and sorting decimal numbers because they were required to peg the numbers in order on a washing line. Next, pupils had to wear a hat with a number, which they could not see, and find out what the number was by asking their friends appropriate questions. Lessons are generally presented in a lively fashion by teachers, who are confident because of their good subject knowledge. Routines are clear and the pace of lessons good. However, these good features of teaching are not applied consistently in all lessons. In some, teachers speak to the whole class for too long, which means that pupils have too little time to work on activities at their ability level. The more detailed information that teachers have about their pupils' achievements is not always used well enough to match activities to their learning needs. This lack of consistency limits progress, particularly for the more able pupils.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

During a recent science week, the whole school took part in investigative work on subjects such as rockets and parachutes. An arts week began with a live band performance and involved activities in dance, music, circus skills and African art. The events were hugely popular and enjoyed by the pupils. A recent performance of 'Joseph' was much enjoyed by the 40 members of the new drama club and their parents. These are examples of the action the school is taking to enrich the curriculum and to make it more exciting and creative. As the improvement in standards is consolidated, senior leaders have plans to turn their attention to a complete revision of the curriculum. At present, it is satisfactory and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Lessons in personal, social and health education successfully promote pupils' self-esteem and well-being, and their sound understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. A good range of extra-curricular activities, such as the multi-skills sports clubs, enhances pupils' enjoyment and personal development. A recently established link with a local technology

company is already promoting the pupils' understanding of the world of work and the use of ICT in the real world.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for in this inclusive, welcoming school. Policies to promote equality are in place and day-to-day practice is effective. However, the impact of these policies is not routinely evaluated and reported to parents and governors. The school has taken successful steps to improve its communication with parents. It has close links with a variety of outside agencies, such as the local authority's behaviour support unit and the traveller education service, to support pupils' well-being and learning. The arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. A scheme of work related to social and emotional learning (SEAL) is being introduced to enhance further the pastoral care provided for pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable.

The purpose of lessons, and what the pupils need to do to be successful, is always made very clear. The best academic guidance for pupils is to be found in writing in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are given clear advice about their achievements and next steps in learning. Overall, academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics but their use is not yet embedded fully. Marking is mainly congratulatory and is seldom related to their learning targets.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Senior staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, with the support of the local authority and the new headteacher, have formulated a clear strategy for bringing about further improvement. The subject leaders for English and mathematics have been working closely with local authority advisory staff and play an important role in implementing the school's new, and increasingly effective, procedures for monitoring the school's performance. The deputy headteacher and key stage leaders have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Leaders of other subjects such as science and ICT have well thought through proposals for improvement, which will be implemented as their area of responsibility becomes a priority in the school development plan. The school's target is to ensure that all pupils make better than the expected progress. The school recognises the need to set more challenging targets to bring about further improvement. With a new chair of governors and many new members, the governing body has been reconstituted. It is presently reviewing its roles and responsibilities. Governors are appreciative of the assessment information they receive from senior leaders because they understand that it will enhance their ability to support the school in its efforts to move forward. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory, with some strengths at the local level, but remains underdeveloped at the national and global levels.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bridgtown Primary School, Bridgtown, WS11 0AZ

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our visit to inspect your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helpful. We particularly enjoyed visiting your classrooms, seeing the work that you were doing and talking to you about your school. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that it is improving steadily.

Things we found out about your school.

- Although standards in the school are below average overall, you make satisfactory progress in your work.
- You behave well in school. You get on well with your teachers. You particularly enjoy the lessons when you do practical activities and solve problems.
- You are making better progress than in the past because the teachers know more about your achievements and what you need to do to improve your work.
- The adults in school take good care of you so that you feel secure.
- The school's leaders are making lots of changes which are improving the school.

What we have asked your school to do now to improve even further.

- Make sure that all your lessons are taught as well as the best ones.
- Make sure those of you who find work easy are given work which challenges you and helps you to make better progress.
- Produce clear information about how well the children are doing when they enter the Nursery so that the headteacher can make sure that they make as much progress as they should.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard, behaving well and making sure that your attendance is always the best it can be.

We would like to wish you all the very best of luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Don Mason

Lead inspector