

Bridgewater Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108466
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	377761
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Joy Frost HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	0–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynn Stephenson
Headteacher	Samantha Robson
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2009
School address	Bridgewater Delaval Road Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE15 6NL
Telephone number	0191 2745290
Fax number	0191 2753296
Email address	admin@bridgewater.newcastle.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	Bridgewater Early Years EY340774
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	47
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	April 2009



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Introduction

Inspection team

Joy Frost
Derek Sleightholme
Zoe Westley
Deborah Wylie

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed 11 teachers teaching 15 lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team observed three 'support lessons,' where additional help is provided by trained assistants, and all staff in the additional resource centre and in the registered childcare. The inspectors met with four groups of pupils including hearing six pupils read from Years 1 and 6. The inspectors scrutinised the work in pupils' writing and mathematics books in three year groups with the subject leaders and the headteacher. Meetings were held with a group of governors and school staff, including senior and middle managers, the special educational needs co-ordinator, and the leader for extended services and the childcare provision. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, the safeguarding and equality policies, bullying and accident logs, the curriculum overview and attendance and pupils' progress data. They analysed 75 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school in an area of extensive social regeneration, but the number on roll is rising. A large proportion of families have been re-housed some distance from the school but choose to continue their child's education at Bridgewater Primary School. The school has a fully-integrated Early Years Foundation Stage Unit for children up to the age of five, which provides wrap-around childcare and extended services.

A very high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and are supported at School Action Plus is above the national average. The school also hosts an additional resource centre, under the management of the school, for the assessment of children under seven years of age with complex learning difficulties from across the city. The school admits an increasing proportion of pupils from a range of Eastern European heritages who have recently entered the country and who speak little or no English. A large proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school at times other than in the Reception year. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. It is not yet good because pupils' rate of progress in reading and writing is not consistently good enough. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and in the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's work to ensure that all pupil groups make good progress. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory and improving across the school. As pupils move through the school, their progress in reading, writing and mathematics improves. It is satisfactory across Key Stage 1 and it is best in classes for the older pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is good because of the school's excellent procedures, which are consistently used and understood by all. There is a group of pupils who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, but close working with parents and carers, coupled with good behaviour plans ensure that learning is not disrupted in lessons. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Teaching and learning are improving in all classes due to focused professional development and careful monitoring by senior leaders. In the good teaching observed, teachers provided stimulating activities which motivate and engage all pupil groups. In satisfactory teaching there is a lack of challenge for more-able pupils. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are often over-supported and some lessons lack pace.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision for improvement which is understood by all staff. Together they closely monitor and manage staff performance. Subject leaders are developing their skills in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and driving improvement in their subjects, but

they do not consider pupils' progress when assessing the success of a new initiative.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress to good in reading and writing, especially for the more-able, by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can do academically in Year 1
 - providing younger pupils with a wider variety of reading books which they can share with parents and carers at home, including non-fiction books
 - improving the quality and range of stimulating, focused activities on offer in the 0-5 Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor areas to enable pupils to initiate their own learning and consolidate learning from the indoor areas.

- Improve the consistency of good teaching across the school by:
 - using assessment data to plan lessons which are a better match to pupils' abilities
 - increasing the pace in lessons so that all pupils are moving their learning forward for the whole lesson
 - limiting the use of printed worksheets in writing lessons to enable pupils to write at length
 - planning different writing activities for different pupil groups which enable all groups to work independently.

- Improve systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's planned actions, by:
 - developing the skills of middle and subject leaders in focusing their monitoring on pupils' learning
 - monitoring the specific actions in the school improvement plan in terms of their impact on how different pupil groups are performing in lessons.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Current pupils' progress across the school is improving rapidly. They enter the school with very low skills and knowledge, especially in communication, language and literacy and in their social and emotional development. The school rightly has a focus on developing pupils' social and emotional skills, communication skills and attitudes to learning. The school's own data show that most pupils make satisfactory progress, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Each year increasing numbers are progressing at a faster rate, especially pupils who have complex learning needs, disabled pupils and those who are at the early stages of learning English. The school is successfully accelerating the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals, so that their attainment is getting closer to the national average.

By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below the national average, but it is improving. New systems to group pupils across the school for lessons in phonics (the sounds that letters make) are having a positive impact on pupils' progress in becoming confident readers and writers by the age of seven. Pupils have developed a love of books and see themselves as readers. Pupils in the Year 1 class can use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words and they are building up a bank of words that they can recognise and spell accurately. Currently the range of books that they have access to is limiting their ability to read unfamiliar text and to develop their independence as readers. They often read the same book for too long.

Attainment in the past has been well below average, but pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to achieve in line with national expectations. Pupils can read a range of texts and use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to access information. The current cohort has made good progress across Key Stage 2 and it is adequately prepared for the next phase of learning. Parents and carers say that their children make good progress, but inspectors found that this is not consistently the case for all pupils.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory and an increasing proportion is good. It promotes pupils' personal development well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well-supported by other adults in the classroom. In most lessons teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can achieve independently. The activities they provide do not always stretch the more-able or encourage the less-able to practise their skills independently. As a result pupils do not make good progress. Marking and feedback to pupils are good and most pupils have targets in their books that tell them the next steps in learning. This is a recent initiative and pupils are encouraged and given time to respond to teachers' comments. Sometimes, however, teachers allow poor presentation to continue unchecked. In writing lessons, teachers' use of published worksheets limits younger pupils' ability to write at length.

The school's recent changes to the way pupils are taught phonics is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to read and write confidently. Teaching in these lessons is good and there is a consistency of practice across the school. Pupils are able to review previous learning, learn new sounds and letters, and practise their spelling of unfamiliar words in every session. The sessions are lively and fun and pupils' enjoyment is plain to see. Younger pupils have satisfactory opportunities to read aloud to adults throughout the week, but the range of books they read is limited to published scheme books. Reading across the school is promoted well through the school library. Parents, carers and pupils think that teaching is good, but inspection evidence found that it is satisfactory.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The vast majority of pupils' attitudes to behaviour and safety are good. From very early in the morning pupils attend a thriving breakfast-club where they make very good healthy choices. Relationships with adults are excellent and pupils respect all adults in the school and are keen to help them. From acting as playground buddies,

mentors to younger pupils or as roving reporters for the headteacher, pupils of all ages readily take on extra responsibility; for example, the pupils who readily choose to wash up in the breakfast-club and older pupils who help and support new pupils to the school and those who speak little or no English.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in school and in the world outside. All pupils spoke knowledgeably about the dangers associated with drugs, alcohol, smoking, cyber-bullying and social networking and have mature attitudes to different faiths and religions. Racial incidents and those associated with prejudice-based bullying are rare. School logs show a declining number of incidents over time and pupils confirm this. The school's behaviour systems are consistently applied and pupils know the consequences of their actions and say that teachers act quickly if incidents of poor behaviour occur in the playground. Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in the school and this was confirmed by inspectors.

Senior leaders give attendance the highest priority through rewards and newsletters and they are not afraid to fine parents and carers where their child's attendance persistently falls below expectations. The family support officer works very effectively with families whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, including those newly-arrived in the country, to settle in and get to know the local area and engage with the school. As a consequence attendance is rising rapidly each term to slightly above the national average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and the governing body have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Their self-evaluation is accurate and they have focused their work on the most pressing priorities. Senior leaders have coped well with the problems associated with the regeneration of the local area, notwithstanding the challenges of a highly mobile school population. Despite these challenges, attendance and achievement at the end of Year 6 have improved significantly and this demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further.

The governing body carries out its statutory duties diligently and promotes equality and tackles discrimination well to ensure that no pupil group is falling behind.

The curriculum meets pupils' needs satisfactorily. There is an emphasis on opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills through increasing cross-curricular links. Cultural, musical, sporting, theatre and spiritual links and an excellent range of before- and after-school activities all underpin pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, the use of ICT as a tool to promote pupils' learning within the classroom is underdeveloped.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are meticulously monitored. Senior leaders carry out regular monitoring of the school's work including lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson planning, and give teachers good feedback to improve their practice. Subject leaders are given time to take part in monitoring and evaluation and produce action plans based on work scrutiny; but they do not routinely monitor the impact of their actions on pupils' learning in lessons or for different pupil groups.

The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

Staff provide a seamless offer between childcare and school spaces. A clear strength is the nurturing positive relationships that are established between the staff, children and their parents and carers. The trust and emotional security provided for the children give them a strong foundation upon which to build their learning. It also gives children in the setting continuity to their time at Bridgewater from the earliest age. Planning and record-keeping systems mirror those in the school and they have a strong focus on supporting children’s interests. Adults support individual children well, but current systems give too little opportunity for focused adult-led input at a level which will accelerate learning. This limits the progress the children make.

Children make satisfactory progress in their learning, although progress is stronger in personal, social and emotional development, and for disabled children, those who have special educational needs and those children with little or no spoken English. The environment indoors is particularly enabling and offers children a very wide range of levels of independence and autonomy. However, this has not yet extended to the outdoor provision, where there is a lack of focused, stimulating activities for the children to engage in with adults. Leaders have improvement plans that are used to tackle gaps in provision, although these plans are not yet fully understood by the whole staff team.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	3

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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 up 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bridgewater Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6NL

On behalf of the inspection team which visited your school recently to see how well you were learning, I would like to thank you for your warm welcome. We really enjoyed talking to you all and I extend a special thanks to your parents and carers who completed the questionnaire and the pupils who gave up their time to read with us. These discussions played an important part in the judgements that we made.

We decided that your school is satisfactory and improving. There are considerable strengths in your behaviour and attitudes to learning. You told us that you get along well together and we observed that for ourselves. It was a pleasure to watch so many of you happily coming into the breakfast-club and taking part so enthusiastically, in the activities on offer there. You have respect for each other and adults in the school and your school is a very safe and ordered environment in which to learn.

We think that you could all make a little more progress so that by the time you leave Year 6 your attainment in reading and writing and mathematics would be in line with national expectations. We have asked the headteacher to make some changes to help you and these are:

- improving the provision for the youngest pupils in the outdoor areas and making sure that you have a good range of books to read at home
- making sure that all lessons are as good as the best and that you all have activities which challenge and extend your learning, especially in writing lessons.

We have also asked your teachers to check carefully that new actions are having a positive impact on your progress in lessons. You can help your teachers by continuing to come to school on time every day and continuing to help and support each other.

Yours sincerely,

Joy Frost
Her Majesty's Inspector

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