

# Bridge Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119999
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	358663
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Stafford

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	354
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Archdeacon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Driver
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mere Close Leicester LE5 3HH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2536092
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2536092
<b>Email address</b>	office@bridge.leicester.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and observed 16 different teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, governors, parents and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation relating to the attainment and assessment of pupils' progress, school policies, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governors' meetings and the provision for safeguarding. They also looked at samples of pupils' work and the school development plan. They analysed 177 parent and carer questionnaires and other written responses from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- What are pupils' skills on entry to the school?
- What are the explanations for the past low attainment in English, and how effective are measures taken for improvement?
- What is the progress and achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for pupils who speak English as an additional language, compared with all other pupils?

## Information about the school

Bridge is larger than most primary schools. A minority of pupils are of White British heritage and the great majority of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, the largest being those from Indian heritage. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, with a majority having moderate learning difficulties. Approximately one in ten of the pupils in each year group join the school after Year 3. The school has a number of awards including Healthy School status.

**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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It is at the heart of a multicultural community where all are welcomed to a warm, caring, safe and happy environment. It is a school always looking to improve, as a governor said, 'We have common aims, and when we reach them, we ask how we can make things even better'. Many parents and carers confirm that the school is always focused on getting the best for their children. The learning partnership, with a neighbouring Catholic primary school, greatly enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of religions different to their own. The school is extremely effective in establishing partnerships with parents and carers, with, for example, regular question and answer sessions between a mother's group and the headteacher. The school has also established a programme that provides opportunities for parents and carers to accompany their children on visits, from which they jointly undergo new experiences. This provision greatly enhances learning, not only for the school and its pupils, but also for the needs of the whole local community. This enables the school to make an outstanding contribution to local community cohesion.

The school has many strengths, including the excellent care and support provided for every learner. This thoroughly socially inclusive school has an excellent understanding of the personal needs of every pupil, especially pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the many pupils in the early stages of learning English. A teacher described this perfectly when saying, 'At Bridge, no child is ever forgotten'. Pupils have great eagerness to learn, are proud of their achievements and work well together. They are cheerful and confident, behave well and enthusiastically accept responsibilities, especially if it can help the school and the local community, where they have high involvement. They feel safe at school, a view strongly supported by parents.

When children begin school in Year 3, or in other years, they have many barriers to learning, particularly in their language development. They make a good start in the school and make good progress in their learning and personal development. They achieve well throughout the school, so that they attain broadly average levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. This is an improvement in mathematics since the last inspection. This is because teaching is good and at times outstanding in some classes. There is evidence, though, of some inconsistency in teaching. Occasionally some teachers do not use the good assessment information they have in their short term planning, especially for the more-able pupils. Consequently, some pupils find the work too difficult, and drift off task, and others are challenged insufficiently to enable them to make consistent progress. Attainment is not as high in writing as it is in mathematics and reading in some year groups. There are too few opportunities for extended writing. However, as in all aspects of the management of the school, the school leaders, led strongly by the clear-sighted and determined headteacher, have a very accurate picture of

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the school's strengths, and areas for improvement. The school's self-evaluation is good and clearly identifies the way ahead through the school development plan. Leaders, including a supportive and challenging governing body, have shown a good capacity to improve, particularly through the positive impact of their efforts to raise attainment. This capacity is also reflected in the improvement in the quality of teaching, and the continued development of an innovative and stimulating curriculum which gives pupils many memorable experiences. This contributes strongly to the outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reinforce the drive to raise attainment by removing inconsistencies in teaching and learning by:
  - using assessment information to plan work that meets the different learning needs of all pupils, especially the more able.
- Improve progress and attainment in writing, especially in those groups where it is lagging behind reading, by:
  - increasing the range and effectiveness of teaching strategies that are used
  - providing more opportunities for extended writing.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>2</b>
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Pupils respond positively in their lessons. They are keen to learn, and participate and speak when given the opportunity. They enjoy their learning and achieve well, describing their experiences as, 'adventurous', 'creative' and 'brilliant'. Pupils from Year 6 talk about their 'talents', because 'we all have one or more'. One pupil indicated that, 'I am very good at encouraging people who are lonely or fed-up'. They know the school rules, behave responsibly and respect one another. They take pride in their work, some of which is displayed colourfully throughout the school. Pupils mention 'loads' of adults that they can turn to if they have personal problems. Pupils have healthy lifestyles which are enhanced by good sports provision, and demonstrated by the school's Healthy School status. Pupils' punctuality is good and attendance is average. Pupils identify rare cases of bullying or challenging behaviour, but say that the staff always deal with these quickly and fairly. Pupils' extremely positive relationships are a strong feature of their excellent moral and social development.

Over the last few years, pupils' attainment has been below average in English and mathematics by the time they leave school. Inspection evidence shows that attainment is steadily rising from generally low starting points, especially in the number of pupils reaching above average levels in mathematics and science. Pupils' writing is benefiting from good improvement in reading, better speaking skills and many exciting writing opportunities across the curriculum. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as their confidence in using the language develops. The progress in learning and achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as seen in lessons, is good. For example, in a Year 5 class, pupils used their existing knowledge to develop their skills of visualising images on the walls of 'Tommy's Room' to write descriptive sentences about them.

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Central to pupils' personal development is their excellent contribution to both the school and the local community. They take many responsibilities, for example, as monitors, and as members of the school council. Work with local schools, and links to ones in Devon and Ghana, has helped their understanding of what it means to be a citizen of the community. Together with pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy, this is good preparation for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with their pupils, manage classes well and have a generally good understanding of the needs of pupils. Some teachers are capable of high quality teaching. This was observed in several classes, where, on one occasion, pupils were encouraged to reflect on how visits to the local park had given them experiences to write about. On another, pupils were expressing their feelings in sentences after making an analysis of an absorbing and stimulating book. Challenging activities and skilled questioning are other teaching skills common to good teaching. However, in spite of regular monitoring by leaders, teaching is sometimes inconsistent. Lesson planning does not always use accurate and good quality assessment data to match tasks to the learning needs of all pupils, especially the more able. Although extension activities are sometimes prepared, pupils may not be given early opportunities to face these challenges during the lesson. This results in differences in the progress made by some pupils. Assessment

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strategies show a clear improvement since the last inspection. Challenging targets are set and known by pupils, and most marking identifies how and what pupils can improve in their learning. There is some inconsistency in pupils following up teachers' advice about how to improve and this can slow progress.

The school provides a good curriculum which is creative and imaginative, and designed expressly for the pupils in the school. For example, each school day starts with 'Think it Over' activities where pupils are asked to reflect on an aspect of their learning. The school makes good use of its own and external resources to provide a suitable curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition it offers many new experiences for learning outside the classroom to pupils with little previous experience or knowledge of the environment. The curriculum is being developed to incorporate more challenging activities for the more-able pupils, and those that are talented. Pupils have been able to work with professional musicians and sportsmen and enjoy taking part in city-wide competitions in a range of sports. There is a strong global element to the curriculum with pupils planning journeys to European destinations and studying the topic of 'Trading Places'. Pupils also have opportunities to learn French, which broadens their understanding of other cultures. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, clubs and visits are popular and well attended. Pupils appreciate these opportunities and talk enthusiastically about their artistic and musical talents. Information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and mathematics are used well across the curriculum.

The school provides a caring and welcoming environment for all pupils. Intervention and support from many teaching assistants is well planned, skilled and meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils who arrive in the school with little or no English are well provided for in the 'Language and Nurture Development' group where their self-esteem rises rapidly.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and ensures they make the same good progress as their classmates. Links with many outside agencies are very effective. Provision for safeguarding and child protection is rigorous and regularly reviewed. The breakfast club has a supportive family atmosphere, is well managed, and offers a good extended service to the school community.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher gives a strong lead to the staff in his desire for a continually improving and ambitious school, providing for the many needs of all pupils. An effective team of senior leaders works very closely with the headteacher, and has been responsible for improving provision across the school, developing the school development plan

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successfully and maintaining the existing strengths in the school, especially the personal and social development of pupils. Leaders spend much time rigorously monitoring teaching and learning. This has enabled them to identify both the considerable strengths in teaching, but also inconsistencies. The staff have been guided to become a mutually supportive, motivated team. This ensures that pupils are cared for in an inclusive learning environment, where they have good equal opportunities to participate fully in school, free from discrimination. The governing body makes a strong contribution to school improvement. Governors use their varied talents effectively, share the school's ambitions, are very supportive and now have the confidence to challenge leaders. They ensure that there is good provision for safeguarding, recently having improved the perimeter fencing. All statutory requirements for health and safety are met well.

There is highly effective involvement of parents and carers, who are encouraged to play a full part in the learning and development of their children. They express great appreciation for the many excellent opportunities and initiatives to engage them in the life of the school. Partnerships to promote learning and the well-being of pupils are good and often linked to the provision for community cohesion. This was seen to good effect when parents joined with pupils in a celebration of their learning about 'Fantastic Mr. Fox'. The school has very high involvement with the local community, but also has strong links with schools in England and other countries throughout the world, such as India and a partner school in Ghana. It has evaluated the impact of its initiatives for community cohesion on pupils' personal development to excellent effect, and is always on the look-out to include fresh opportunities. The school makes effective use of its resources to promote achievement and gives good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Over half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is more than is typical. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire have very positive opinions of the school. They feel that their children are safe, that they enjoy school, and that teaching and leadership and management are good. Typically, a parent commented, 'The school teaches good morals and behaviour. It provides excellent support and helps with the needs of the community. There is excellent understanding and respect for the religious needs of the children'. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns, in particular about how the school helps support children's learning. The inspection team found that the school provides many opportunities for parents and carers to support children's learning, but does not communicate how to participate in these events widely enough.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bridge Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 177 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 354 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	121	68	53	30	3	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	110	62	66	37	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	67	38	88	50	19	11	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	76	43	84	47	8	5	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	89	50	82	46	3	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	41	81	46	19	11	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	46	79	45	15	8	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	70	40	80	45	11	6	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	70	40	89	50	8	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	89	50	71	40	6	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	56	32	97	55	9	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	85	48	78	44	2	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	108	61	60	34	2	1	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



3 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Bridge Junior School, Leicester, LE5 3HH**

Your school provides you with a good education. You help to make it a special place for everyone in your school, because you are happy, lively, enjoy learning and are well behaved. We enjoyed meeting you all, and hearing from you about your life in school. I was really impressed with those of you who told me about their trips out of school, including a visit to Devon, and how well you feel you all get along with each other in school.

The team of inspectors think you are very well cared for by the staff, and were very pleased to hear how safe you think you are. We think that from when you first start school you learn well, and develop well as young citizens, know how to support your peers and clearly tell right from wrong. Throughout your time in school, we think you make good progress in your learning and you are improving all the time, especially in mathematics. The teaching and classroom support is good and there is good leadership from the headteacher and other leaders, who are always trying to help the school in every way. They provide you with many exciting and enjoyable learning activities especially through visits to the cinema, to inspire writing, and the many visits you make with your parents, who share in your new learning experiences. No wonder everyone from the area you live in, including your parents and carers, are so supportive of the school.

Everyone in the school wants it to improve even more, so we are suggesting how this might be done. We have asked the school leaders to help the teaching become even better, by making sure that all of you are doing work that is not too difficult or too easy. We have suggested that this can be done by making sure that teachers' plans meet the learning needs of each one of you, so that you can all make good progress, particularly with your writing.

We are confident that you will try to do your best, and find that learning is fun in Bridge Junior.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford

Lead inspector

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