

# Brindley Heath Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124094
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380800
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Speakman

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>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kevin Davies
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jason Willets
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Enville Road Kinver DY7 6AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 872343
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@brindleyheath.staffs.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	21–22 November 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	380800

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who saw 13 lessons and observed nine teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plans, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records was scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors took into account the results of questionnaires returned by 126 parents and carers, 217 pupils and 19 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are progress and attainment in mathematics as good as in English?
- Do teachers make work challenging enough to ensure that all pupils, especially the more able and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make the progress of which they are capable?
- How useful is marking and the feedback pupils receive in helping them improve the quality of their work?
- What initiatives have the new leaders implemented and what is the impact so far?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized two form entry junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and none are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. The school has been awarded Healthy Schools status, Artsmark Gold, Basic Skills award and the Primary Science Quality Mark.

At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had only been in post for 10 weeks.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

Brindley Heath Junior School provides a satisfactory quality of education, which enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. Pupils enter Year 3 with attainment that is broadly average, and when they leave at the end of Year 6 it is also broadly average. However, there are clear signs of improvement. The overall 2011 national test results and those in mathematics remained average, but those in English improved to above average. Pupils in Year 6 are currently working at levels above those expected for their age in English and mathematics. However, lesson observations and the work in pupils' books shows that a significant number of younger pupils, particularly those of average or below average ability, have weak number skills, for example an insecure understanding of multiplication and division bonds and quick, accurate recall of these number facts. This weakness undermines pupils' confidence when learning other aspects of mathematics and sometimes slows progress.

Pupils' personal development is good. Good care, guidance and support promote this effectively. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around school. Consequently, pupils feel safe and enjoy school a great deal. They have a good awareness of healthy living and the uptake of sporting opportunities in out-of-school clubs is impressive. Pupils' contribution to school life and to the wider community is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but varies too much from class to class. Some outstanding and good lessons were observed where pupils were well motivated and fully engaged in learning at a brisk pace. Where teaching is less effective, work is not matched precisely enough to the needs of different ability groups or does not build enough on prior learning. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Marking is inconsistent in informing pupils of what they need to do to improve their work, although some good quality marking, which was helpful in moving pupils on, was seen in Year 6 pupils' writing books.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are good and add interest and enjoyment to learning. However, pupils do not always have enough planned opportunities to practise and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. There are links between different subjects in some lessons, such as science and numeracy, but this is largely left to individual teachers when planning lessons and is not structured enough to be fully effective across the school. Pupils develop their basic information and communication technology skills well, but do not

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use them well enough as a tool to support learning in other subjects.

There is a great deal of optimism for the future under the new leadership. The staff inspection questionnaires indicate great solidarity and full support of the work of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. 'I feel strategies implemented by the headteacher are positive and have improved learning for the children which is why we are all here,' was typical of the views expressed by staff. The new headteacher brings a track record of previous success in school improvement and an accurate insight and deep analysis of what this school needs to do to move forward. However, the impact of initiatives has not yet had time to be fully demonstrated in outcomes. The capacity for sustained improvement is therefore not yet better than satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics in order to raise attainment by:
  - improving basic skills in number at an early stage so that the next steps in learning are based securely on a solid foundation
  - ensuring that pupils at all levels of attainment are consistently provided with challenging work.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement by:
  - making sure that at least 80% of teaching is good or better
  - consistently making effective use of assessment information to match more demanding work to pupils' needs at all levels of attainment
  - improving the quality of the marking to reflect the good practice seen in English, so that it consistently informs pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.
  
- Develop the curriculum by:
  - providing more links between subjects to develop numeracy and literacy skills and make learning more meaningful and exciting
  - raise the profile of information and communication technology as a tool for learning in other subjects.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

<b>3</b>
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Pupils make satisfactory overall progress as they move through the school. Because of the variation in the quality of teaching, progress is uneven across the key stage, and it accelerates in Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Because some teaching groups are large, lower ability pupils or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always receive enough individual attention. However, teaching assistants know their pupils well; they are skilled and work in close teamwork with teachers to provide effective support.

Pupils demonstrate a great enthusiasm for learning. They are obviously proud of their school and enjoy everything it has to offer, but are not always challenged enough in lessons. Pupils are friendly, welcoming and articulate their thoughts clearly. Pupils feel safe in school and free from any form of intimidation. If they ever feel threatened, they know who to go to and are confident that matters will be resolved. Pupils willingly help each other and work harmoniously in collaboration with each other. Year 3 pupils showed great excitement at the prospect of interviewing Odysseus and Polyphemus to find out about their characters. They are equally good at working independently for sustained periods. Year 6 carefully planned an extended piece of writing, and the results demonstrated their ability to remain focused.

Pupils know about healthy eating and how to stay safe in different situations, and they engage in a good amount of physical exercise. Their knowledge and their understanding of healthy lifestyles are good. They respond well to good opportunities to contribute to school life by keenly taking on responsibilities such as the school council, prefects, buddies to younger pupils and a wide range of jobs around the school. Pupils have good relationships with the local community and play a significant role in village life. Pupils are prepared well for the next steps in their education. Their increasingly good academic skills, particularly in literacy and information and communication technology, initiative and ability to work effectively within teams prepare them well for the future.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>2</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

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<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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Areas of strength evident in the best lessons observed included strong and supportive relationships between adults and pupils, clear explanations of what learning is expected to take place in lessons, and effective support from teaching assistants. Good use was often made of the recently introduced 'keys to success', consisting of hints to pupils on how to achieve success. An excellent example of this was seen in a Year 4 information and communication technology lesson where pupils were very clear about the task, were confident about what they had to do because of effective guidance, and completed the tasks independently. However, teaching in over a third of the lessons seen was satisfactory. In these lessons, common weaknesses included teachers not having high enough expectations of what pupils could do and not challenging them enough. In some cases teachers wrongly assumed pupils had a competent grasp of basic skills and so tasks were based on insecure prior learning, particularly in mathematics.

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well, and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities supports pupils' physical development particularly well. However, it has not yet been fully developed to promote and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects, or link subjects together to make learning more interesting and exciting. Teaching groups for literacy and numeracy are organised by ability, but the wide range of ability in the groups means that work set for pupils capable of higher attainment in the lower sets, and the lower attaining pupils in the higher sets, is not always focused precisely on their capabilities. A good level of support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable includes close links with a range of different agencies, which work well with the school to ensure pupils' safety. Pupils with medical conditions are very well cared for and staff are vigilant in ensuring their health and safety.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

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The headteacher and deputy headteacher already work as a strong team. Through a clear and accurate evaluation of provision and outcomes, they have established an aspirational yet realistic vision for the school’s future development that is shared by teachers, support staff and the governing body. Staff ensure that any discrimination is tackled well. Senior leaders and teachers regularly check the progress of individual pupils and have a clear view of which pupils will need support to ensure they keep up with their classmates. However, the weaknesses in teaching mean that not all groups are reaching their full potential, and so equality of opportunity is no better than satisfactory.

Subject leaders are supported effectively to take increasing responsibility for leading developments within their areas of responsibility. The coordinators for English and mathematics carry out a range of monitoring activities and use this information well to identify the actions that need to be taken to further accelerate progress. This has been effective in raising standards in writing, which has been the priority for improvement. The headteacher has already formed a clear view of strengths in teaching and aspects that could be improved. He has a clear action plan to improve the quality of teaching and learning, including regular monitoring, feedback and support for teachers. This has already started to improve teaching by eradicating any that is inadequate, but leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure teaching in the great majority of lessons is good or better.

The governing body provides a satisfactory level of support. Its members frequently attend events and monitor the work of the school through the headteacher’s reports. They have a clear plan on how they intend to increase the level of direct monitoring and hold the school to account for its performance. Because there are some new governors, they have recently conducted an audit of skills and have a planned programme of training.

Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. In this harmonious community, pupils get along very well. Parents, carers and the local community are closely involved and a thriving ‘parents’ association’ provides good support. However, leaders are aware that provision to develop pupils’ knowledge of the world beyond their own community is more limited and have clear plans to address this. Child protection arrangements and procedures for keeping pupils safe are good. Effective steps are taken to ensure that safety and staying safe are promoted well through the curriculum. The school works well to ensure the safety of vulnerable children and makes appropriate use of support agencies. All safeguarding requirements are fully met and the record of checks on staff is exemplary.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3



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<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. The very large majority show a good level of support for the school. Some added positive comments such as, 'I cannot praise school enough for the education it offered my children. Staff are knowledgeable, kind and well prepared & make it a thoroughly good learning environment,' and 'I am very pleased with the high expectations at the school. The staff motivate and enthuse the children. My son is a very able boy and there seems to be good planning and opportunities to ensure he achieves his potential.' Many comments reflected the way the school is improving under new leadership. For example, 'Evidence of new leadership is clear and very positive.'

A few comments raised concerns, mainly about the quality of feedback that parents and carers receive about their children's progress. This was discussed with the headteacher, who agreed this could be improved and has plans to ensure teachers' feedback to parents and carers is more meaningful in the future.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brindley Heath 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 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	69	38	30	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	99	79	27	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	36	29	76	60	10	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	34	68	54	11	9	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	52	41	71	56	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	37	29	75	60	11	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	37	71	56	6	5	0	0
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)	49	39	63	50	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	45	36	65	52	12	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	45	64	51	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	29	80	63	3	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	55	44	66	52	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	60	48	64	51	1	1	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**

23 November 2011

Dear Pupils



### **Inspection of Brindley Heath Junior School, Kinver, DY7 6AA**

Thank you very much for welcoming us when we inspected your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit, and meeting and talking to you in lessons and in the group discussion. You are clearly very proud of your school and enjoy attending. Your views were very helpful to us in making our judgements.

At present your school is satisfactory, but it is improving under the leadership of the new headteacher. As a result, your work is showing signs of improvement. You all make satisfactory progress overall and the standards in your school work by Year 6 are similar to those found in many other primary schools. However, we noticed some weaknesses in your mental mathematics skills and this sometimes gets in the way of you making better progress in mathematics.

Your personal qualities are good. We were very impressed by your behaviour, which we think is excellent. You show a sensible and mature approach to school life. We found you to be polite, courteous and very welcoming to us as visitors to your school. All the adults who look after you make sure that the school is a safe and pleasant place for you to learn and make friends.

We have asked your teachers to do the following to help raise standards further.

- Improve your progress in mathematics and raise standards by making sure you are all skilled at mental mathematics.
- Make sure that the teaching in most lessons is good or better by ensuring that teachers match challenging work to your capabilities and make marking more useful in helping you to improve your work.
- Develop the curriculum so that it gives you more opportunities to use and practise literacy, numeracy and computer skills and to make learning meaningful by linking subjects.

We are confident that the school will move forward and that you will contribute by continuing to have very positive attitudes to school, and learning and behaving as well as you do now.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman  
Lead inspector

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