

Bridgewater Primary School

Bridgewater Drive, Northampton, NN3 3AF

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides effective leadership. Leaders are raising expectations and bringing about improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors have high expectations of the senior leadership team and school. They check closely to confirm that pupils' achievement and teaching are good.
- Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and get on well together. At times their behaviour is exemplary. They have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. They understand what is the right thing to do. They learn the responsibilities of citizens in modern British democratic society.
- Teachers ensure that, regardless of background or ability, all pupils make good progress. In 2014, the progress of Year 6 accelerated in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards throughout the school, particularly in reading and writing, are rising.
- Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They settle quickly, enjoy school and make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are not sufficiently well developed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, four of which were seen together with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other shorter visits to lessons and attended an assembly. They spent time looking at pupils' books and heard some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan.
- In making their judgements, inspectors took account of the 169 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View), and 57 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rachel Cooke	Additional Inspector
John Mason	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger in size than the average primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The remaining pupils come from a number of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend on a full-time basis.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (approximately 8%) is much smaller than average. Almost none are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs listed at school action level is about 1%. This is well-below average the national average. The proportion identified for extra support at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about 3%. This is also well-below average.
- Approximately 10% of the pupils are supported through the pupil premium; this proportion is well-below average. Pupil premium is additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school is in the process of a phased expansion to move from two classes in each year group on entry to three. Currently there are three classes in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2. There are two classes in each of Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Extensive building work is being undertaken to accommodate the increase in numbers.
- In September 2014, senior leaders started to support a nearby school to improve.
- The school hosts privately run breakfast and after-school clubs. This provision was not part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teachers demand better handwriting and presentational skills from pupils who do not, currently, present their work well enough.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides effective leadership and management. The sharing of responsibilities with able and enthusiastic senior and subject leaders and good governance ensure that teaching is effective and pupils get a good education. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and achieve well.
- Good leadership of early years provision enables children to gain in physical and emotional well-being. Consequently, they make good progress.
- The headteacher has built a strong senior leadership team and encourages others to take responsibility. Subject leaders are helping to improve results following the effective training they have received in analysing performance data on pupils' achievement and in checking their work.
- All leaders contribute to the evaluation of the school's performance. They have accurately identified the school's strengths and any weaknesses. The key areas for development are correctly identified and set out in the detailed school development plan.
- The headteacher undertakes regular observations of teaching and evaluates its impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have regular meetings with the headteacher to review their teaching and pupils' progress. They must explain if any pupil is not making at least the nationally expected rate of progress and support is added to remedy the situation. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the extensive range of learning opportunities provided. Pupils' learning is enriched – for example, through educational visits and celebrating festivals from different countries and religions. Pupils' cultural development and creativity are enhanced through art and music. They gain understanding of right and wrong and appreciate the responsibilities of citizens in a parliamentary democracy.
- Staff work together effectively to manage the changes required by the revised National Curriculum. In all classes, leaders ensure that there is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Updated procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress against new curricular requirements are in the process of being developed. Staff are currently agreeing statements to reflect the different levels of expectation.
- Leaders ensure equal opportunity for all. They use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to narrow any gaps between eligible pupils' achievement and that of others. Sports funding is used to employ specialist sports staff and to train teachers. The range of sporting activities, clubs and entries to sporting competitions has increased. Activities are having the beneficial impact intended on pupils' physical fitness and well-being.
- Local authority officers have analysed the school's performance and accurately judged it to be performing well. The local authority has enlisted the help of senior leaders in supporting other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors and the headteacher work together effectively to enhance provision for pupils. There is a measured projection of how the school will develop with increased numbers.
 - Governors make certain that procedures to keep pupils safe are followed and that the school meets the requirements for safeguarding.
 - Governors attend training and have a good understanding of data on attainment and progress. They are able to compare the school's results with national and local data. They use the information to set the school challenging targets and regularly check progress towards these.
 - Governors set appropriate targets for teachers to improve their practice and manage staff performance well. They only reward teaching that ensures pupils' good achievement.
 - Governors are keen to promote good relationships within the school and the local community and never accept discrimination of any sort.
 - The school's finances are monitored well. Governors make sure the primary sports funding and pupil

premium allocation are spent to good purpose.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have an increasingly positive attitude towards learning and enjoy their work from the early years provision onwards. However, too many pupils do not present their work neatly. This is because some teachers do not set expectations high enough for this aspect of pupils' work.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. In some classes, pupils have an exemplary attitude to learning. There has been one half-day exclusion since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' above-average attendance, punctuality and positive attitudes to learning help them make rapid progress.
- Pupils are thoughtful, responsible and considerate of others. They get on well together during lunchtimes and play sensibly on the playground. Pupils show respect for the school environment. Displays and equipment are valued. There is no litter.
- Staff and most parents responding to the questionnaire and the online, Parent View, survey think that behaviour in the school is good and that pupils are kept safe. Inspectors endorse these positive views.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' safety from the early years provision onwards. Leaders make sure the building is secure, staff are checked for their suitability prior to appointment and safety guidelines are followed.
- Pupils feel safe in school and understand different types of bullying, for example name-calling, homophobia, fighting, racial bullying, or religious intolerance. They say that such behaviour is rare in school. They say that if such an incident occurs, they know who to turn to and are confident that it would be dealt with fairly and swiftly by senior leaders.
- The school makes sure that pupils have an excellent understanding of the potential traffic and 'stranger dangers' from on-site building work. Pupils appreciate the need for following temporary rules in the car parking areas and say they wish that all parents would comply with school requests on this matter. They are aware of the dangers when using the internet and what to do if they have any concerns.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. Accurate day-to-day assessment of pupils' progress and attainment enables teachers to plan challenging learning activities. Teachers make sure that pupils build effectively on previous learning.
- Throughout each lesson, teachers check carefully that pupils understand the work and are making the progress intended. Consequently, pupils of all abilities, including those who find learning difficult, the most able and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- Not all teachers place sufficient emphasis on ensuring that pupils develop their handwriting skills and present their work neatly. Consequently, some pupils are not rigorous enough in presenting writing and mathematical work, where errors can result from untidy presentation.
- Teachers promote pupils' reading, writing and numerical skills well. The marking of pupils' work in their English and mathematics books is good because they are given clear guidance on what to do to improve the content of their work. Most pupils respond positively to the comments and add their own thoughts. This helps them to make progress and reach challenging targets.

- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. As a result, pupils are confident to share their ideas with each other and with the adults. This practice effectively promotes their social skills, their ability to communicate clearly and to respect each other.
- Teachers are strongly committed to equality of opportunity for each individual. Where there is any danger of pupils slipping behind, particularly those who find learning difficult and a few who have special educational needs, they are given effective support from teachers and the well-deployed teaching assistants.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage work well together. They ensure that children settle quickly and learn in a safe and secure environment.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils in all classes are making good progress and achieving well. Standards at the end of Year 6 are rising in all subjects and pupils' progress has accelerated. The 2014 end-of-year national test results show that the proportion of Year 6 pupils making good progress during their time in Key Stage 2, in reading, writing and mathematics, was much higher than previous years and the latest national comparisons.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make broadly similar progress to that of their classmates. This is because teachers and teaching assistants frequently check on the progress of each individual and provide carefully directed help when needed to enable them to make good progress.
- In 2013, Year 6 disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieved well. Overall, they reached broadly similar standards to those of their classmates. Disadvantaged pupils were about six months ahead of their classmates in mathematics, but about six months behind their classmates in reading. Standards in writing were broadly similar. Compared to all pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were about eight months ahead in mathematics and four months ahead in writing. Standards in reading were broadly similar to those of all pupils.
- School data for 2014 show that the gap in attainment widened slightly. Disadvantaged pupils were about 12 months behind their classmates and their rate of progress was behind that of their classmates. There were few disadvantaged pupils in this year group, so results were not as reliable as from previous years. Currently, school data show that gaps in attainment in Years 3 to 6 are closing. During the inspection, disadvantaged pupils were seen to be making good progress and achieving well in all classes.
- From their various starting points, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development in all areas by the time they enter Year 1 is in line with national results.
- In the 2012 and 2013 Year 1 phonics checks, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was well above the national average. Results slipped in 2014, but inspectors found good practice in teaching and learning of phonics (sounds that letters make) during the inspection.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 are usually above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional data for 2014 suggest that standards are likely to be a little lower than usual when slightly fewer pupils reached the higher levels. Nevertheless, this result still represents good progress from pupils' starting points.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 were marginally higher than those in 2013. In 2013, overall standards in mathematics and reading were about three months ahead of all pupils nationally. In writing they were six months ahead. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and the school's assessment records indicate that pupils are on track to reach higher standards in all subjects by the end of the current academic year.

- In all classes, pupils' writing is developing well. Older pupils are encouraged to bring their writing to life through the use of adjectives, adverbs, similes, metaphors and personification. However, some do not take sufficient care when forming their letters and in the presentation of their work. As a result, they make mistakes and errors are difficult to track.
- Most pupils in Year 6 read confidently and explain their reasons clearly for their choice of book and offer suggestions to their classmates on reading material. In mathematics, pupils enjoy investigating number and are starting to work out simple equations.
- Most-able pupils respond well to the tasks set by teachers and set themselves challenging targets. As a result, they are making good progress. Older pupils read with expression and good pace, seldom hesitate over words and interrogate the text for deeper meaning. When writing, they turn confidently to a thesaurus to extend their vocabulary. In mathematics lessons, they use mathematical terminology confidently and correctly to explain their thinking.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how sporting activities contribute to healthy living and are eager to take part in the wide range of sporting competitions. The effective use of the primary school sports funding has ensured that staff are more confident in teaching a range of sports and pupils enjoy the activities.

The early years provision is good

- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The three classes share a large and interestingly shaped classroom and reasonably sized well-resourced outdoor area.
- Teachers and other adults work together effectively to help pupils of all abilities learn and make good progress. They act as positive role models and effectively promote the children's health, safety and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Children's skills on entry to the Reception classes are generally broadly in line with those expected for their age. Children get off to a good start and enjoy the various well-planned activities both indoors and outdoors. Good relationships between the adults and children are quickly established. This, combined with the opportunities for the children to mix with each other in a supportive and secure environment, help them feel safe and behave well.
- By the end of the Reception Year, children's skills and knowledge are close to what is expected of a typical 5-year old, and they are suitably prepared for Year 1. The attainment of the children on entry to Year 1 in 2014 was higher than that in 2013.
- Teaching is effective. The adults routinely share their observations of the children's attainment and progress. The assessments are systematically recorded in the children's learning profiles and used well to plan future activities so that children build on their learning. Adults make it clear to the children what is expected of them.
- Procedures for keeping children safe are well established. Regular checks are undertaken to make certain that equipment is safe.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122076
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	449628

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	510
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Kay
Headteacher	Alison Harvey
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2009
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