

Bridlewood Primary School

Chartwell Road, Swindon, Wiltshire SN25 2EX

Inspection dates

5–6 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The school has declined significantly since its previous inspection.
- Pupils' outcomes are inadequate. Pupils do not make the progress they should. By the end of key stage 2, their progress in English and mathematics is significantly below that of other pupils nationally.
- Governors have failed to challenge school leaders about the decline in pupils' achievement. As a result, there has been little improvement in the standards pupils reach in English, while in mathematics, standards have declined even further.
- The school's assessment system has not been fit for purpose. It has not provided teachers, leaders or governors with the information they need to track and improve pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders are ineffective at raising standards in their subject areas.
- Teaching is inadequate. Leaders and governors did not ensure that teachers planned for the full implementation of the national curriculum. Therefore, many pupils have gaps in their learning. They have not been well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. For middle-attaining, most-able and disadvantaged pupils in particular, the work they receive is not challenging enough.
- Leaders have not provided teachers with the feedback and support they need to improve their teaching.
- Behaviour management systems do not promote good behaviour for a small number of pupils. Their behaviour disrupts the learning of others.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve lower standards than pupils nationally. Additional funds for them are not spent effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- In her short time in post, the new headteacher has brought in new systems of assessment and staff appraisal. It is too soon for the impact to be seen in pupils' achievement.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly improve the impact of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - leaders focus on rapidly improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement
 - governors robustly and accurately challenge the school's leaders about the standards pupils reach
 - standards rise quickly in English and mathematics, particularly for most-able and middle-attaining pupils
 - the additional funds for disadvantaged pupils are spent effectively to rapidly improve their progress and attainment
 - middle leaders' roles are developed so that they take a full part in holding teachers to account for the progress pupils make.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - pupils are taught the full requirements of the national curriculum so that they have the skills and knowledge to make the progress expected of them
 - teachers' expectations are raised significantly to provide the appropriate level of challenge for most-able and middle-attaining pupils, particularly in English and mathematics
 - assessment accurately and quickly identifies those pupils who are not making the progress they should, particularly most-able and disadvantaged pupils
 - teachers accurately assess pupils' learning and adapt their teaching quickly to pupils' needs
 - teachers receive the timely and accurate feedback they need to improve their work
 - teachers use behaviour management systems effectively to manage pupils who have challenging behaviour, so eliminating any disruption to learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- There has been a time of considerable disruption in the leadership of the school. This turbulence has contributed to the school's decline.
- Leaders did not plan and implement the changes to the national curriculum when it was introduced. They acknowledge that they did too little and too late. Governors did not check that pupils were receiving the curriculum they need. As a result, many pupils, especially older pupils, have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This means that they do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to work at the level expected for their age.
- Governors did not robustly challenge school leaders about the school's results in 2016. As a consequence, little was changed to improve outcomes for pupils. The school's self-evaluation was over-optimistic and inaccurate. The school's plans for improvement were not closely linked to the issues raised by the dramatic fall in pupils' results in 2016.
- Over time, leaders have not given teachers the accurate and timely feedback they need to improve their work. There has been little follow-up to monitoring activities such as work scrutiny. Leaders have not effectively held teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes.
- Systems of assessment have not been fit for purpose. They have concentrated on what pupils have done, rather than assessing their knowledge and skills. Assessments have not accurately informed teachers and leaders which pupils, and groups of pupils, were falling behind the expectations for their age. In addition, the assessment information provided did not enable governors to effectively challenge school leaders about the progress pupils had made. Recent changes, brought in by the new headteacher, are much more effective at identifying pupils vulnerable to underachievement.
- Middle leaders have been ineffective in raising standards in English and mathematics in particular. However, in part, this is because they have not received the necessary support from senior leadership to enable them to challenge teachers and hold them to account.
- Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that the additional funds for disadvantaged pupils are spent effectively. There has been little evaluation of the impact of the funding on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes, which are significantly below those of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been well spent. The progress of these pupils is inconsistent. Until recently, the leader for special educational needs has not been able to closely monitor the work pupils do. There has been limited monitoring of the effectiveness of the interventions put in place for pupils. This means that work is not well matched to pupils' needs.
- Leaders have not ensured that systems of behaviour management support teachers to

manage the behaviour of a small number of pupils who find it difficult to behave well. As a result, there are times when the learning of others is disrupted. Staff, pupils and parents feel that the new headteacher has brought a different approach. She listens carefully and responds to concerns raised to her.

- In the short time she has been in post, the new headteacher has swiftly changed many of the school's systems, including assessment, staff appraisal and support, the school's marking and feedback policy and curriculum planning. However, it is too soon for the impact of these actions to be seen in pupils' achievements.
- The involvement of the local authority, which had previously been limited, has been well targeted in recent months. The efforts of local authority officers and other professional partners have paved the way for the necessary changes. However, this work is not sufficiently embedded or sustained to have had the required impact on pupils' learning and achievement.
- The school's physical education (PE) and sport provision is well led. The additional funds of the primary PE and sport grant are spent effectively. For example, a rise in the number and range of after-school clubs has seen an increase in pupil participation rates so that around 80% of all pupils now take part in at least one club. The addition of a running track means that all pupils can take part in a daily run, fulfilling the school's aim that every child should be physically active during the day.
- Through a range of sporting, artistic and cultural activities, pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is catered for well. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain, for example through their school council.

Governance of the school

- Governors did not hold the headteacher and leaders to account for the significant decline in standards at both key stages in 2016. Little was done to put in place actions that would improve outcomes for pupils. As a result, there is, as yet, little sign that outcomes are improving.
- The governors did not ensure that the changes to the national curriculum were implemented and taught. They have been ineffective in ensuring that pupils at the school receive a good standard of education.
- Governors were, for the most part, too accepting of the information they were given by the school's leadership. Newer governors who did seek to ratify leaders' views by seeking external advice were poorly advised; information they received did not help them to reach a more accurate evaluation of the school's performance.
- Increasingly, governors have a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. The information provided to them by the new headteacher, including more accurate assessment information, means that they are starting to challenge leaders more effectively about the progress pupils make.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and have a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. Up-to-date training means that staff are clear what their responsibilities are. The school works effectively with outside agencies, and with parents, to support pupils and their families. Leaders are not afraid to challenge other professionals to secure safe outcomes for children.
- The school's systems make sure that staff are recruited safely, and the induction process places emphasis on the culture of safeguarding that the school promotes.
- Staff and governors have taken part in training to help them protect pupils from the risk of radical or extreme influences and so understand their responsibilities well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Over the period of time since its introduction, teachers have not cohesively planned for the full requirements of the national curriculum. This has led to a situation where pupils, in particular older and most-able pupils, have not been taught the skills and knowledge they need to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Over time, there has been little difference in the work given to the most able pupils and middle attainers. Neither group has been challenged well. As a result, there are many pupils in both groups who have not made the progress of which they are capable.
- In English and mathematics, the feedback pupils receive about their work has not made clear to pupils what to do next to improve their work. Teachers now provide feedback in line with the school's policy, introduced by the new headteacher. However, it is too soon for evidence of accelerated progress to be seen in pupils' books. Pupils are only just beginning to catch up on lost learning. There is a considerable legacy of underachievement to overcome.
- Expectations of pupils' handwriting and spelling have not risen with the expectations of the new curriculum. This limits the progress pupils can make towards working at the expected standards for their age.
- In mathematics, increased opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and understanding have yet to have an impact on the progress they are making, particularly for the most able pupils. Pupils' mathematics books show a range of topics covered, but limited progress. There is little evidence of successful coverage of mathematical skills in other curriculum subjects.
- In writing, few pupils write in greater depth at any point in the school. Pupils have limited regular opportunities to write independently at length and to apply the skills they learn to their writing. Sometimes basic grammar and punctuation errors go uncorrected for a considerable time. There is little evidence of any writing work for pupils in Year 6 since the middle of the summer term, meaning that pupils' skills are not continuing to develop, putting them at an additional disadvantage when they move to secondary school.
- Pupils enjoy reading and read well relevant to their age and development. Phonics is well taught, particularly in the Reception class. The number of pupils reaching the

threshold of the national phonics check in Year 1 is above the national level. Pupils can use their phonic knowledge to accurately decode unfamiliar words.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- There are times when pupils do not routinely demonstrate perseverance and determination. Some are too dependent on adult attention to keep them motivated; when an adult moves away they stop what they are doing. This is because their work is not well matched to their needs.
- Pupils know what bullying, including cyber bullying, is. They say that it does not happen often. Pupils know whom to talk to if they have a worry or concern. However, some pupils, and parents, feel that the school's leaders have not handled bullying effectively. Pupils and parents both say that the new headteacher has brought a positive ethos to the school, that she listens to concerns and will act to resolve them.
- A large majority of pupils say that they feel safe and happy, and enjoy school. The majority of parents agree that their children are safe at school and well looked after.
- The breakfast club provides a safe and friendly start to the day for pupils, so they are ready to learn.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The behaviour of a small number of pupils can disrupt the learning of others. This is because the school's behaviour policy does not support staff to manage this behaviour effectively.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well, for example in corridors, in classes and when attending assembly. As pupils say, the school's expectations of behaviour help them to look and feel smart.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous to each other and adults. They understand and value the school's rules, rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is close to that of other pupils nationally. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is declining. The attendance of those pupils who are absent most often is improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils do not achieve the standards of which they are capable at this school. In 2016, fewer than one third of pupils reached the expected standard for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. Very few pupils were able to work at a higher level in reading, writing or mathematics.
- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 is significantly below the national level. In 2016, the school was below the government's minimum standards and in the bottom 5% of all schools. There is little sign in pupils' books of accelerated progress during this year.
- Pupils do not make the progress they should from one key stage to the next. Children enter and leave Reception at a typical level for their age: however, by the end of key stage 1, their achievements are below the national level. By the end of key stage 2, their progress and achievements are very significantly below national levels.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, do not make enough progress in reading, writing or mathematics at either key stage. Until recently, there has not been a clear focus on their needs by teachers and leaders.
- Most-able and middle-attaining pupils do not receive work that challenges them to deepen their understanding. As a result, too few of them have the skills and knowledge to exceed the expected standards. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where a lack of coverage of the curriculum, for example in reasoning, has resulted in gaps for many pupils in their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make inconsistent progress. Some find it hard to tackle their work because it is not well matched to their needs. This has limited pupils' progress over time.
- Over time, the number of pupils who reach the threshold of the national phonics screening check in Year 1 is at the national level.
- In early years, the number of children who reach a good level of development by the end of their Reception Year is in line with the national average.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with skills and attributes typical for their age. At the end of Reception, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is at the national average. However, few of the most able children have reached a level of development where they are exceeding the early learning goals.
- The start they receive in their Reception Year means that most children are well prepared for the learning they will meet in Year 1.
- Children in early years show positive attitudes to learning. They behave well. They are keen to learn and to share their enjoyment with each other, and the adults who help them.
- Teachers' careful planning creates interesting starting points for children to explore their learning. In the outdoor learning environment, there are activities for children to investigate in all the areas of learning. However, for the most able children, the

activities provided do not always help them develop their learning to a deeper level.

- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported so that they make good progress in early years from their different starting points. Teachers' and other adults' skilful questioning means that these children are encouraged to develop their knowledge and apply the skills they are learning, for example when a group of less able pupils were encouraged to consolidate their phonics knowledge through the support of a teaching assistant.
- Currently, there are no disadvantaged children in early years. Over time, disadvantaged children leave early years with knowledge and skills similar to those of children nationally.
- Children who speak English as an additional language are supported well so that they leave early years with skills similar to those of children nationally.
- Children in Reception receive a strong grounding in phonics. Children use their phonics knowledge to help their reading and writing. Children read accurately and with enjoyment, including from their own simple written sentences.
- The positive behaviour of children and their strong relationships with the adults around them demonstrate the confidence and safety they feel at school. Their parents agree, feeling strongly that their children are safe, happy and well looked after at school. Safeguarding is effective.
- Parents can contribute to the assessment of their child's learning through regular meetings with staff and opportunities to view their child's work. Parents speak highly of the warm, welcoming and inclusive transition their children make into the Reception class.

School details

Unique reference number	134134
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10025050

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Boffin
Headteacher	Vicky Sammon
Telephone number	01793 706830
Website	www.bridlewoodprimaryschool.org.uk
Email address	head@bridlewood.swindon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Bridlewood Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The number of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below national average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities is at the national average.
- The school is below the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for attainment and progress in 2016.
- The headteacher joined the school at the start of the summer term 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Pupils' learning was observed in 21 sessions or part-sessions, many jointly with leaders. The work of pupils in all year groups was scrutinised. Many pupils were spoken to about their work during lessons and informally at breaktimes, lunchtimes and around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read and met with pupils to gather views about their experiences of school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other leaders, governors and a representative of the local authority. Meetings were held with members of the school staff to gather their views.
- Inspectors took account of the 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and to 48 comments received. Discussions were held with parents at the start of the school day and during a school sports event. A phone call was also received.
- A range of documentation was considered, including information on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement planning, records of the monitoring of teaching, and information on the management of teachers' performance. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, including information relating to attendance, behaviour and the exclusion of pupils, were examined.

Inspection team

Sarah O'Donnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Fox	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Bragg	Ofsted Inspector

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