



Badgerbrook Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119978
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291589
Inspection dates 16–17 October 2006
Reporting inspector Doris Bell

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Badger Drive |
| School category | Community | | Whetstone |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 | | Leicester LE8 6ZW |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0116 2752353 |
| Number on roll (school) | 440 | Fax number | 0116 2866363 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mitzi Moran |
| | | Headteacher | Josie Russell |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 September 2001 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In September 2005, for the first time, this large primary school admitted its entire intake at the start of the school year. Children's attainment on entry is broadly as expected for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. The school has the Investors in People Award and an international award for its work with schools abroad. Staffing has been unsettled recently because of illness. The present headteacher was appointed in April 2006 following a period of eighteen months when she was acting headteacher. There is no deputy headteacher at present and there is an acting senior leadership team.

Key for inspection grades

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| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school does well for its pupils, and its effective provision results in a good standard of education. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, therefore pupils in all age groups achieve well. Standards are above average. The school has successfully improved pupils' writing skills but girls still outperform boys in this aspect of English. Much has been done to improve pupils' ability to solve problems in mathematics. Although this is improving, it remains an area of development for the school.

Teachers skilfully adapt the good, well-planned curriculum to the needs of their pupils. Their planning is thorough. They evaluate it rigorously and adjust it daily in response to pupils' learning. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties, make good progress. The provision for children in Reception is good and many exceed the standards expected for their age.

Good leadership and management ensure that any dips in pupils' progress are quickly identified and remedied. When this happens, pupils receive good support to get back on track. The leaders and managers, including governors, have done well in helping the school to move forward during a period of unsettled staffing and a change of leadership. Checks on teaching and learning are rigorous, and excellent teamwork, wholly focused on improvement, is evident throughout the school.

The good care, guidance and support given to pupils contribute effectively to their good personal development and well-being. Pupils greatly enjoy learning. They quickly become absorbed in their tasks and try hard to do well. They praise their teachers for being kind and for helping them when they are 'stuck'. All pupils have targets for literacy and numeracy but not all understand them. The quality of teachers' marking varies and although some is good, that of others is less helpful to pupils trying to reach their targets. These inconsistencies prevent pupils' progress becoming even better. Nevertheless, the pupils' good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, together with their good personal skills, prepare them well for the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help boys to catch up with girls in writing, and help all pupils to become better at solving problems in mathematics.
- Check that all pupils understand their targets, and improve the consistency of teachers' marking so that it always shows pupils what to do to reach them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good, pupils' progress having improved in the past year. Standards are above average. Children in Reception make good progress and most exceed the national expectations by the end of the Reception Year.

The school sets itself challenging targets based on the outcomes of its rigorous analysis of test results and its meticulous tracking of pupils' progress. It met its targets for mathematics and exceeded those for English in 2006. Of particular note is the number of pupils who reached the higher level in English. Better teaching has helped to improve writing, which was the weakest aspect of English in all age groups. Pupils are now enthusiastic about writing and this is helping their progress. Although boys' writing has improved overall, the gap between the standards reached by boys and girls remains greater than that found nationally.

The pupils' inability to solve problems in mathematics was accurately identified as the reason why progress was not better than satisfactory in 2005. The school is tackling the issue successfully and pupils have risen well to the challenge to use specific mathematical vocabulary correctly when answering or explaining their answers. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated this clearly as they posed problems for, and solved problems with, their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils develop as well-rounded members of the school community. Children in Reception settle quickly and develop positive attitudes to school life. This enthusiasm and enjoyment of school is evident in all year groups and underpins the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. It is also reflected in their good levels of attendance.

Pupils get on well with each other but there are few opportunities for older and younger pupils to play or work together, largely because of the lunchtime arrangements. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes, although occasionally, in one or two classes, a few are not as attentive as they could be. Pupils contribute well to the school community, taking on a variety of responsibilities, for example, as school councillors and play equipment monitors. They are enthusiastic about raising money and helping those in need, and they are developing good personal and collaborative skills which will help them in later life. They say that they feel safe at school and know how to stay healthy. Despite this, they tuck into crisps at playtime, acknowledging that 'we know they are not good for us'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers systematically evaluate pupils' progress and their own good planning. Both are rigorously checked by senior leaders. All of this has greatly contributed to the pupils' good achievement because the information is used effectively to adjust learning activities daily in efforts to ensure they meet the needs of all pupils.

The additional challenges given to more able pupils, and the simpler, more practical activities given to slower learners, are at different times supported by well-briefed teaching assistants. This enables pupils to be taught in smaller groups and further enhances their learning. However, pupils' progress dips from time to time in some classes. The school is tackling this well, having accurately identified where it happens.

There are too many variations in teachers' marking. As a result, literacy and numeracy targets, which are based on the teachers' good knowledge of their pupils, are not as effective as they might be in accelerating pupils' progress. Teachers do not always give pupils pointers for improvement and they rarely refer to pupils' individual targets when they do.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school ensures that all pupils can participate in all aspects of its well-planned curriculum. This contributes effectively to their good progress. There is a strong emphasis on developing basic skills, together with the successful promotion of healthy and safe living. Good use is made of ICT to support teaching, including the very good use of the recently introduced interactive whiteboards.

The school is making the curriculum more creative, most notably in Years 1 and 2. Learning is made more interesting by good links between the subjects, often through the use of theme days on different historical topics, for example the Vikings, Romans and Victorians. The school has good links with its main secondary school and the local 'family of schools'. These successfully extend what the school offers in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The range of out-of-school activities is satisfactory but the range of enrichment activities is good. Many visitors and visits, including a residential one for older pupils, contribute effectively to the pupils' learning and personal development, and their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff look after pupils well. This good level of care is based on constructive relationships between teachers, assistants and pupils. Consequently, pupils are confident that they have an adult to turn to if they need help of any kind. All reasonable measures are

taken to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. This underpins their good progress.

The guidance given to pupils is good. It contributes greatly to their learning and to their personal development. Pupils' progress is carefully checked, especially in English, mathematics and science. Any pupils not making the expected rate of progress are very quickly identified and supported. Pupils know what they have to do to increase their learning, but there is some inconsistency in how this information is passed on to them and their parents. For example, pupils in one Year 2 class could explain what their targets were, what they needed to do to reach them, and how they would know when they did. This is not the case in all classes.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has successfully weathered a period of changeability caused by staff absence and illness. During this period, good leadership and management, including that by governors, has kept it firmly focused on improvement. All staff and governors are involved in checking and evaluating the work of the school. As a result, morale is high, staff have a good knowledge of their own performance and that of the school, and there is an excellent team spirit. The school's evaluation of itself is accurate and well founded.

The senior leadership team is driving forward improvement well. It is supported effectively by other school managers. The success with which the school tackled the identified weaknesses in writing illustrates it well. This school is not complacent. It is constantly looking for ways to improve pupils' learning. Recognising that there were weaknesses in teachers' marking, it revised its guidance for this. However, that guidance is not yet specific enough to ensure consistency throughout the school.

The school has good links with parents and outside agencies. It regularly consults pupils and parents, and values and acts on what they have to say. The good capacity for further improvement stems from proven success in good improvement since the last inspection, the more recent improvements in writing and the commitment of all staff and governors to raising standards and achievement still further.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
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Overall effectiveness

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes |

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. It was a delight to talk to you and to find out how well you are doing. We really enjoyed listening to you and finding out how much you enjoy school and that you find your teachers kind and helpful. Badgerbrook is a good school and you are taught well. Here are the other things we found:

- you make good progress because you try hard to do well and your teachers make sure you learn more and more each day
- your behaviour is good and you work well together. You know how to keep yourselves safe and why it is important to keep fit and healthy
- the adults you work with care deeply for you. They guide and support you well in your learning and help you to become quite grown up by the time you leave Year 6
- the curriculum (the school's plan of everything you need to learn) is good and your teachers use it well to work out what to teach you
- the headteacher and the governors run the school well. They want to make it even better than it is now and are constantly looking for ways to do this. You can help them with your suggestions and by continuing to work as hard as you possibly can.

We have asked your school to keep up its good work and to help you to do even better by:

- helping boys to catch up with girls in writing, and helping all of you to get better at solving problems in mathematics
- checking that all of you know your targets and making sure that when they mark your work, your teachers always try to show you what you need to do next to try to reach your targets even faster.

We hope that you will continue to enjoy learning and to be as enthusiastic as you are now, when you grow up.