

# Clifford Bridge Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 103668            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Coventry          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 308376            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 13–14 May 2008    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Clive Kempton HMI |

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>                     | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 233   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Sue Jeffs   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Gerald Union                                      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 26 April 2004                                     |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Coombe Park Road<br>Binley<br>Coventry<br>CV3 2PD |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 02476 451720                                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 02476 440369                                      |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Clifford Bridge is a one form entry school on the south eastern edge of Coventry. Thirty three pupils attend the Nursery. Three-quarters of the pupils are from a White British background with Asian Indian being the next largest ethnic group. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is nearly half that of the national average. In 2007, the school celebrated the award of Investors in People and Healthy Schools' accreditation. The acting headteacher was appointed to the substantive role in April 2008, two weeks before this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Clifford Bridge is a satisfactory and improving school. One parent described the school well as 'a friendly, caring school with a family feel'. Pupils develop into confident, articulate young people due to the good personal development opportunities provided by the school.

Pupils enter the Nursery with standards that are typical for their age. They make a flying start and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. In the rest of the school, pupils' progress is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Standards have fallen over the last three years. Writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2 have been particular weaknesses. However, the new headteacher, with good support from the local authority, has successfully managed to halt this decline and motivate staff and senior leaders with a new energy and determination to improve standards. There has been a lot of progress in a short space of time. One key development has been the tracking of pupils' progress. Whilst at the early stage of development, tracking is becoming much more embedded in the school. Underachieving groups of pupils are now identified for additional support. Teachers have become more aware of the issues facing the school, have noted the 'very positive atmosphere' in the staffroom, and 'feel more involved' in the improvement agenda. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are no better than satisfactory, as not all pupils have been supported enough in their academic achievement and some have underachieved in the past. This is now beginning to change. Pastoral care is good.

Inevitably, there is still a lot of work to do to improve the quality of teaching, as it is no better than satisfactory overall. Teachers establish very good relationships with the children in the lessons, and pupils behave well and listen to the teacher. However, too many lessons do not have enough stimulating or challenging activities to motivate the pupils, the teacher talks too much, and pupils are not involved enough in their own learning. The objectives for the lessons are not clear enough in language that the pupils can understand, and are not consistently referred to as the lesson develops. The curriculum is also satisfactory as it does not fully meet the needs of all learners.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is why their attendance is above the national average. They behave well in and around the school and are very polite and willing to engage in conversation with visitors. This is due to the good emphasis the school places on the personal development of pupils and the range of leadership opportunities available as pupils get older. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their spiritual development is satisfactory, as they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to discuss and share their views in lessons. Positive features are pupils' moral and social development such as aspects of the curriculum and residential visits, school performances, and success in the arts and sport.

Leadership and management across the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the new headteacher is good. His determination to get all involved in raising standards has been successful, although there is still work to do. He is well supported by an able acting deputy headteacher. Together they make a good team. The subject leaders are becoming more involved too and are developing action plans for their subject areas. They do not have time yet to monitor standards but are developing a much stronger overview of their subjects. It is too early to judge the full impact of the new management on pupil outcomes. Therefore, managers at all levels

are currently judged to have a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements identified in this report.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards in the Foundation Stage are above average and children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Literacy and mathematical development are particular strengths. Teaching is mainly good. The leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory as the phase leader teaches in Key Stage 1 and is distanced from the provision.

Regular observations provide valuable, effective assessment information which is used well to plan the wide range of exciting, well organised learning opportunities both indoor and outdoor. The curriculum is rich and stimulating and offers many first-hand experiences. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, and the well established routines help children to feel safe. Relationships with adults are good. Children enjoy school and engage very positively with all adults. Partnership with parents is strong and productive and contributes to the good outcomes. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included well and there is also sufficient challenge for the more able children. The outside area is being developed and transition to Key Stage 1 has been identified by the school as an area for improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching.
- Increase the rate of pupils' progress through more rigorous tracking at all levels.
- Ensure that all lessons are more exciting and have a greater variety of learning activities that consolidate learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. The good start and above average standards in the Foundation Stage are not maintained throughout the school. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there has been a downward trend in standards of attainment since 2005 due to insufficient monitoring of standards and inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Recent positive action has reversed this trend and there are signs of improvement in both standards and progress. Particular weaknesses are writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2. The school has identified these weaknesses.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils develop their personal and social skills well by, for example, mentoring younger pupils, acting as a 'playground buddy' or being part of the elected pupil council. Some pupils develop good financial and budgeting skills through the AWESUM mathematics club linked to a local building society.

Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are very positive, despite the often satisfactory teaching. They adopt healthy eating habits with fresh fruit available free to all pupils daily. They are all active too, enjoying the popular and plentiful lunchtime and after-school clubs which range from traditional sports to short tennis and line dancing. Some walk or ride

bikes to school. Some identified pupils are also well targeted in collaboration with their parents, to become more active.

Pupils feel safe in school and report negligible bullying, racism and name-calling. One pupil commented, 'It doesn't happen in this school.' They also report that teachers deal very quickly with incidents if they occur. Through the various trips the school organises, pupils develop confidence, a good knowledge of their local and wider community, and a good understanding of economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are some pockets of good practice. The school has an accurate view of the quality of teaching. There is a lack of consistency across the school. In many lessons, the teachers spend too much time talking and the children are not involved actively enough with their learning. The pace of lessons is too slow. Assessment opportunities are limited and this has the effect of slowing down the progress learners make in the lesson. Lesson planning does not always take account of the full range of learners' abilities. In lessons, higher achieving pupils are not sufficiently stretched to motivate them to make better progress and achieve higher standards. However, planning and teaching for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is often well differentiated and adult support is effective.

A strength of the teaching is behaviour management. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and many pupils enjoy their lessons. In classes where teaching is good, pupils make better progress and are more involved in their learning. Clear feedback is given on how to improve. In the best lessons, there is a brisk pace, teachers explain the learning objectives and help pupils to understand their targets and how to achieve them. The layout of the classrooms is not conducive to focused learning opportunities as the open plan setting makes each classroom a thoroughfare.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Extra-curricular provision is good. Whilst there is a good range of visits and other stimuli to motivate learners, the curriculum is currently insufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of different abilities and the imbalance of gender in some cohorts. Insufficient account is taken of the subject ability profile of individual classes when they transfer to another class. For example, a weaker cohort for writing is not picked up in the subsequent year group. Over-reliance on published intervention strategies misses the opportunity to create a bespoke curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Stronger features of the curriculum are visits to local partnership centres, to national museums in London, residential trips to Wales, and local trips to Coventry to appreciate the local history.

The strength of the extra-curricular provision is its breadth. Music, competitive sport, recorders, mathematics club and cross country are examples of the well attended and popular provision. There are good opportunities for pupils to represent the school in sports teams and to become involved in activities organised by the local authority with other schools. Staff willingly give their time to run clubs, or outside agencies and parents are used to work with the pupils.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, although aspects of pastoral care are good. The tracking of pupils' progress has been a weaker element in the school in the past. This is changing. Where tracking is now more established, for example in the tracking of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, children in the Foundation Stage and those in Year 6, there is evidence of accelerated progress. This tracking has yet to have an impact on all areas of the school. Not all pupils have targets to work towards. Teachers do not give sufficient feedback to pupils on how to achieve their targets.

Strengths of the pastoral guidance are the relationships between teachers and pupils and the openness of all staff in this friendly, caring environment. One pupil commented, 'You can talk to any of the teachers.' Statutory safeguarding procedures are also robust and well administered.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management across the school are satisfactory and improving quickly. The recently appointed headteacher and his deputy have 'pulled the socks up of the school'. This quote from a subject leader in the school describes the positive impact the new leadership has had in a short space of time in turning round the declining standards in the school. Whilst there is still a long way to go, there is a developing consistency and motivation throughout management. Subject leaders are developing more confidence in acquiring an overview of their subjects across the school and drawing up action plans to improve the provision. Self-evaluation and monitoring are still embryonic, but there is a willingness to become more accountable for the standards achieved in their subject areas.

Parents are very loyal and supportive. They report how happy their children are to come to school and its high reputation in the local community. They appreciate the new headteacher's daily presence in the playground. Communication is regular between the school and home through the weekly newsletter, and the school website is developing. Other professionals associated with the school are also full of praise for the school. Collectively, they described the school with words such as 'welcoming, caring, creative, approachable, enthusiastic and engaged'.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are very committed to their role in the school and have fully supported the new headteacher in his task of improving standards. They are now much more aware of the improvement task in hand and are increasingly holding the school to account for standards it achieves through regular monitoring reports from the headteacher.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 3   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 3 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 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

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 3 |

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 3   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 3   |
| 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  |

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Clifford Bridge Primary School, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2PD

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, watching you learn and looking at your work in your books. I thought you would like to know what we thought about your school and how we think it could get even better.

- You go to a satisfactory school that is improving fast.
- You could all work a bit harder, as the standards you attain are average and should be above average.
- You behave well in lessons and in the playground.
- You do lots of things in school that develop your self-esteem and help you grow into confident young people.
- We think your new headteacher and deputy provide good leadership.
- Your staff work hard for you and run lots of trips, clubs and other activities as well.
- You have the opportunity to go on lots of trips, both locally and nationally.
- Those of you who need additional help receive good support from other adults in the school.
- There are lots of clubs for you to join at lunchtime and after school that keep you active and clubs that allow you to represent a school team.
- You are eating the right sort of food that will help you stay healthy.
- You were all very polite to visitors and keen to tell us what you thought about your school.
- Some of you enjoy learning a musical instrument and taking part in the parents' assemblies and other performances.
- You are proud to say you go to Clifford Bridge and are a credit to your school.

To become an even better school we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do the following things.

- Improve the quality of teaching.
- When the school knows you need extra help, they will provide it.
- Make all lessons more exciting and contain a greater variety of activities that help you learn more.

Clive Kempton Her Majesty's Inspector

## Annex B



15 May 2008

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**Inspection of Clifford Bridge Primary School, Binley, Coventry, CV3 2PD**

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- Those of you who need additional help receive good support from other adults in the school.
- There are lots of clubs for you to join at lunchtime and after school that keep you active and clubs that allow you to represent a school team.
- You are eating the right sort of food that will help you stay healthy.
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- Make all lessons more exciting and contain a greater variety of activities that help you learn more.

Yours sincerely

Clive Kempton  
Her Majesty's Inspector