

# Bridge and Patrixbourne Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 118654          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Kent            |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 313031          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 8 July 2008     |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Helen Hutchings |

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>                    | Voluntary controlled                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |   |
| School                                    | 395   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Christine Ash                                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Renuka Chinnadurai                                |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 16 May 2005                                       |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Conyngham Lane<br>Bridge<br>Canterbury<br>CT4 5JX |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01227 830276                                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01227 830649                                      |

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

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

current rates of progress through the school

whether the school's evaluation of the school's curriculum and academic guidance as outstanding is justified; and

the evidence to support the school's assessment of the Foundation Stage as outstanding. Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, analysis of school and nationally published data, pupils' work, teachers' planning, the views of parents, and discussions with pupils, staff and representative governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This large school serves a predominantly White British population. It has a small percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups, a few of whom speak English as an additional language. There are significant numbers of able pupils. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The range of needs is broad, but they mainly relate to specific and moderate learning, emotional and behavioural, and speech and communication difficulties. The school holds Healthy School, Activemark, Investors in People and Green Flag awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. The school has many outstanding aspects to its work and parents are overwhelmingly supportive of it. Many wrote comments praising the school's Christian ethos, the hard-working staff and the exceptionally wide range of experiences provided for their children. As one parent wrote, 'The school is a cornerstone of a close-knit community.' Another parent, whose son is leaving the school shortly, commented: 'It has been a fantastic learning environment for him at Bridge. A superb school.' Pupils are equally positive about the school and say that they would not want to change anything.

Pupils enter the school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are generally a little above the levels expected for their age. Outstanding provision in the Reception classes means that children enter Year 1 with an excellent basis for later learning. Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress through the rest of the school. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are consistently above national averages, although they remained static following a slight fall after the last inspection. However, in 2007, standards in English, mathematics and science in the Year 6 national tests improved again and were exceptionally high. School data show that pupils are likely to reach similarly high levels this year. The school regularly meets its targets for its performance and is beginning to exceed the increasingly challenging targets it sets itself.

This school shows no signs of complacency and is working towards a national Challenge Award. To achieve this the school wants to accelerate pupils' progress and staff are developing teaching further to ensure that all groups of pupils, particularly middle and higher attaining pupils, have more open-ended challenge in their work to enhance their thinking skills. Progress rates through the school are already beginning to increase because leaders put effective strategies in place to secure improvement when they identified that teaching and progress were not consistent. Carefully planned sharing of expertise is bringing more teaching to the level of the best, rightly described by some parents as 'inspirational', and making learning more consistent through the school. Good attention to addressing the personal development of pupils who have identified learning needs and high quality academic provision mean that they make good progress, and in the last year a significant number have made exceptional progress. The progress of all pupils is tracked rigorously and any pupil at risk of falling behind is given very good support to catch up. Teaching assistants are skilled and have been trained to run specific catch-up programmes. Marking and comments resulting from regular assessment point out to pupils what they have to do next to improve and many of their books show useful written dialogue between pupils and teachers, reflecting pupils' excellent attitudes to taking responsibility for their own learning.

Pupils enjoy school a lot and say that 'teachers make it easy'. They describe their learning as 'fun, particularly the educational and residential trips', recognising that the outstanding curriculum enriches their experiences. It enables pupils to achieve well across a broad curriculum, with art, drama and music being significant strengths. The curriculum is exceptionally well designed to ensure that pupils develop their skills progressively by building well on earlier learning. Pupils identify for themselves what they already know and discuss what they could learn about for each of their termly themes. The way in which the whole school works on similar learning strands at the same time provides a focus for all age groups to share their learning. For example, during the inspection the reading strand of 'interpreting text' was broken down into a series of targets shared with each year group. These learning intentions give pupils a clear understanding of their learning and the activities planned for them bring this to life, such

as Reception children writing their own books linked to a story they had read, while Year 2 pupils were looking at postcard writing or using masks to talk in character. Staff plan lessons together very well and, because year teams change regularly, they bring new thinking to their plans to keep learning fresh and stimulating. The vibrant displays of pupils' work are evidence of how the school keeps learning alive for pupils, described by a parent as 'a fantastic hands-on approach'. The school rightly attributes some its success in improving achievement to its recent encouragement for pupils to use and apply their knowledge through problem solving. The school makes very good use of relevant and exciting resources for pupils to handle, such as the 'Punch and Judy' puppet show for younger pupils, linked to their seaside theme.

The high quality care, guidance and support, together with the curriculum, make a major contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils say that this is a very safe school and their excellent attendance is further evidence of their enjoyment of school. They know that any concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with well. Opportunities, such as Year 6 pupils managing the sale of books to pupils and parents, help pupils to develop their financial understanding and prepare them very well for their future economic well-being. The personal, social and health education programme ensures that they have an excellent understanding of how to have a healthy lifestyle. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of sports clubs and older pupils thoroughly enjoy acting as 'play leaders' organising games for younger pupils at playtime. Pupils are very actively engaged in a range of playtime activities, including physical activities and other quieter pastimes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They have an acute awareness of the needs of others, shown in their frequent initiatives to raise funds for charity or the mature way in which 'peer mediators' help pupils to resolve issues for themselves. Their care for one another and those in the wider community embodies the ethos of the school. Pupils' cultural development is fostered exceptionally well, with pupils enjoying regular visits to the school by drama groups and also performing beyond the school, for example when the choir performed in the Gulbenkian Theatre.

One of the key reasons for the school's success is the high quality of leadership and management across the school. The headteacher's drive and determination to provide the best possible education for pupils inspire other members of the school community. Adults' enthusiasm and love of coming to school each day rub off on pupils, who talk about the school as having 'supportive teachers and warm surroundings' and say teachers 'make you confident'. Many senior leaders are relatively new to their posts, but have expertise recognised and valued beyond the school, making them good role models for others. Leaders and governors have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they use this knowledge highly effectively to focus developments on actions which will have the greatest impact on pupils' achievements. The capacity for continued development is excellent. High quality provision has been built on since the last inspection. The school has a history of high achievement in English and recent initiatives have brought significant improvement in mathematics and science standards.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children's love of learning is promoted outstandingly well from their earliest days in the school. Children's attainment as they join the school varies considerably from year to year but is generally a little above the levels expected for their age. The excellent planning and management of pupils by all the adults in the Reception classes mean that the children's achievement is

excellent across all their areas of learning. Adults are skilled in assessing children's individual needs and use their understanding to personalise learning. Children learn within an exceptionally high quality and stimulating environment. Activities are planned to build on children's enthusiasm and which carefully develop their skills. For example, during the inspection over lunchtime, part of the outdoor area was transformed into a seascape where children role-played sea rescue with boats and lifebelts, giving them a superb experience developing their understanding of their own safety and the world around them. Such rich activities stimulate children's imagination, and they then reflect this in their own stories. Children develop their literacy and numeracy skills quickly. The current pupils in Reception have reached high standards compared to what is typical nationally.

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

- Implement the plans to give pupils more open-ended challenges in their work.

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## 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? | 2   |
| 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?   | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1   |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve?  | 2 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 1 |
| 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?                                  | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 1 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 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? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 1 |

<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>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| 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  | 1   |
| 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

9 July 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Bridge and Patrixbourne CE School, Bridge CT4 5JX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you and hearing about the things that happen in the school. You are right to be proud of your school and you know that you get a good education.

- These are some of the things I particularly liked about the school.
- Children get off to an outstanding start in the Reception classes.
- Everyone works very hard to make sure that you have extremely interesting things to do in lessons. All the visits and visitors linked to your class theme make learning fun.
- The displays of your work around the school show just how many things you do and how much care you take with your work. This helps you to do well.
- Your behaviour is excellent and this helps everyone to enjoy school a lot.
- You are very aware of the impact of your actions on one another and try hard to help each other whenever possible, for example as members of the school council or as 'play leaders'.
- You have a lot of clubs and many of these help you to stay fit and healthy.
- You are looked after very well. The school is a safe place and you know that you have an adult to turn to if you have a problem.
- Your headteacher runs the school very well and makes sure that everyone works together as one big team. The staff know just what to do to make the school even better.

You say that you do not want anything to change in the school. I agree that not much needs to change, but your teachers are always planning things to help you to make even faster progress and I agree with them about the most important thing they want to do. This is to make sure that the work they give you is always challenging and gives you more opportunities to think things through for yourselves.

Please thank your parents for returning the questionnaires. It was helpful to hear what they think about the school. I wish you all the best for the future and hope that Year 6 pupils do well in their new schools in September.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen Hutchings Lead inspector