

# Bidston Village CE (Controlled) Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131281
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	315771
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Blackburne

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	326
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ronald Iveson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lynne Hazeldine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Ballantyne Drive Bidston Wirral CH43 7XG
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 6520673
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 6532405

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 3 Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Bidston Village school is a larger than average primary school. It serves an area with a high level of social and economic disadvantage. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. No pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has within it two Education Inclusion Bases to cater for pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school opened in September 2006 following the amalgamation of two primary schools. The school has gained Activemark accreditation.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Bidston Village is a good school where pupils are well cared for and helped to become successful learners and confident, responsible young people. The school is well led by the headteacher who is effectively binding together the school community in this recently amalgamated school. She leads an effective management team, which is improving standards and ensuring a positive and welcoming atmosphere within the school.

Relationships are very good and as a result the school is a happy place in which to learn and work. Pupils' behaviour is good and their positive attitudes in lessons ensure that most progress well. As this is a fairly new school, there is limited evidence of how well and consistently pupils achieve over time. However, current progress is good, although standards are below and sometimes well below average. The school is aware that standards should be higher and has prioritised this. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and focused. Teachers and pupils get on well together and resources are effectively used to support learning.

The school's interesting curriculum adds to pupils' enjoyment of school. They have opportunity to take responsibility and to develop a variety of interests through participating in a good range of after-school clubs. However, attendance is not as good as it should be and is below the national average.

Pupils are well cared for. Many make good progress because they receive special help to overcome their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' progress is closely tracked to ensure that any who fall behind receive the help they need to catch up. The targets set for all pupils in English and mathematics are shared with parents so that they can support their children's learning.

The school examines its own performance well. It has an accurate picture of itself and high expectations for its improvement. The school works successfully to improve identified areas for development. Writing is a good example, with new approaches to teaching this aspect of English having been implemented in all classes. As a result, pupils now make good progress in writing and standards across the school are showing good improvement. This is a clear indication that the school has a good capacity to improve.

The school cares about all its pupils and their families and in return parents are very supportive. Parents are very happy with the education provided for their children and with the many good opportunities for them to develop effective personal and social skills. One parent said, 'My children really enjoy school and I am very pleased with the progress they are making'. Through its special Education Inclusion Bases and good links with many other organisations and agencies the school ensures that the most vulnerable pupils are well cared for and supported. The school is well resourced and ensures pupils' good academic and personal achievements. It provides good value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter school with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy and personal and social education. A good dialogue exists between parents and staff. This helps children to settle quickly, to make a good start to their schooling and ensures a trusting relationship between school and home. Children are taught and supported well and as a result

they make good progress. A recently introduced programme to develop children's understanding of letter sounds is having a positive impact on their early reading skills. The curriculum is interesting and children's learning is as effective outdoors as it is indoors. Children are successfully encouraged to be independent and good relationships develop between children and staff. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well with all staff well focused on ensuring pupils' good personal development and rapid academic progress. Children experiencing particular difficulty with their learning are identified early and a range of effective strategies are used to support them. Children leave the Foundation Stage with skills below the national average, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their ability to calculate number.

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

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The standards attained by Year 2 and Year 6 pupils in the national tests and assessments in 2007 were significantly below the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The school, rightly, recognises that standards should be higher. Nevertheless, in the relatively short period that this school has been open, pupils have made good progress and many have made up lost ground from earlier underachievement. Well focused support for underachieving pupils has underpinned pupils' good progress. Furthermore, good teaching of writing has made a particularly notable impact on improving standards and progress in this area. The current Year 6 pupils are well placed to meet the challenging targets set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to the specific teaching and good quality, targeted support that they receive

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good and well promoted, for example, by high quality assemblies. Relationships are very positive throughout the school and as a result pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they have a problem. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and courteous. The recently introduced 'Zone' system to help pupils behave better has had a positive effect. Pupils remarked, 'there is a better atmosphere in school now'. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Despite a series of measures put in place by the school to improve attendance this remains below average.

Pupils contribute well to their school community by taking on responsibilities, such as being play leaders. There is also an active school council, which has recently been influential in changing the lunchtime menu on offer to pupils. This has helped pupils make healthy choices. Pupils also have a good knowledge of the dangers posed by drugs and smoking and of the benefits of regular exercise. Many pupils choose to take advantage of the active after-school clubs on offer. Pupils contribute to the wider community by their regular fund-raising for both local and international charities. Pupils' future economic well-being is supported well by the good progress they are making in acquiring basic skills and their good personal development.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers maintain good relationships with pupils and manage classrooms effectively. There is a positive learning atmosphere in all classrooms enabling pupils to enjoy their lessons and learn well. Most lessons are interesting and well planned. Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs. Teaching is generally good but there are some examples of satisfactory teaching across the school. Sometimes teachers' introductions are too long and as a result pupils' attention wavers. Although teachers regularly set learning objectives, not all fully explain the purpose of lessons to pupils. Resources are used well to interest and stimulate pupils. An example of this was the good use of an interactive whiteboard in a science lesson to show how a vibrating guitar string produces loud or quiet sounds. The quality of marking is generally good, but it is consistently better in English than in mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well and is an important factor in their good achievement and personal development. It is well suited to the needs of most pupils, including those taught in the Education Inclusion Bases. The range of visitors into school supports the provision of effective health education and successfully promotes pupils' understanding of safe practices and healthy lifestyles. Pupils also benefit from visitors into school who work with them on topics such as history of the local area. The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits to places of interest, including a residential trip for some of the older pupils. All pupils in Year 4 benefit from tuition in playing a brass musical instrument. A number of well attended extra-curricular activities support learning and cater for a wide variety of pupils' interests. These range from gardening to street dance. The school's participation in the Sports Co-ordinator programme and a good range of physical activities in lessons encourage pupils to be physically active.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support helps to create a positive environment in which pupils thrive. A particular strength is the pastoral care provided. Staff know pupils very well and this helps them to ensure their good welfare, sometimes in very challenging circumstances. Another strength is the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes those pupils who are helped in the Education Inclusion Bases, who generally have a greater level of need than others. As a result, all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. The work of staff involved in intervention programmes, for example to help reading skills, also has a good effect on progress. Teaching assistants effectively support lower-attaining pupils to make good progress, for example with their reading. Safeguarding procedures are in place. The school rigorously tracks pupils' progress and uses the information gained to set challenging targets for the school's overall performance and for groups of pupils within classes. Staff are using these targets well to promote pupils' good progress. The school is keen to improve attendance and has introduced a range of strategies, including incentives, to encourage some pupils to attend more regularly.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has successfully led and managed the amalgamation of two schools. She has a clear vision for the school, which is centred on raising standards and valuing each pupil as an individual. This has been communicated very effectively to the whole school community and these values now underpin the school's positive ethos. A new leadership team has been formed which has initiated strategies to raise standards. Some of these strategies are already beginning to have an impact.

Clear systems to check on the school's performance are in place and are beginning to have an impact. Effective links have been created with local schools, support services and other agencies to benefit pupils and their families. The school has a good relationship with parents, who hold it in high regard. The governing body is very supportive, questioning leaders and managers about the school's performance when necessary. The school generally evaluates itself well and involves the whole teaching team in this process. It clearly identifies areas for development, which the school acts upon promptly and efficiently.

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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
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### 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	NA
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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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?	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	3
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?	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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

Inspection of Bidston Village CE (Controlled) Primary School, Bidston, CH43 7XG

On behalf of the inspectors, thank you for the special welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Everyone was very polite and helpful in answering our questions.

We judge your school to be good. It is a very caring place and the support you get helps you to improve. You work hard in lessons and are making good progress. Many of you are catching up well on your work, but we know that you could attain higher standards so we have asked your school to help you do this. We were pleased to note that you are well behaved and you develop into responsible young people. You have very sensible attitudes to your lessons.

Your headteacher leads the school well and she makes sure that as well as trying to help everyone be the best person they can, she also helps them to do as well as they can with their learning. We could tell that you like your teachers and that they help you to learn well. We were very pleased that you go on visits and have lots of visitors into school to help to make your learning even more interesting and fun. We were very impressed by the way you try to help others and the sensible way you do the jobs you are given.

You all enjoy your time at school but your attendance should be better so we have asked your school to help you do better in this area. It is important that you all try to come to school every day.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make your school even better.