

# Heap Bridge Village Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105797
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	324270
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Hepworth

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	142
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Dominic Scrivens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Marcus Cockcroft
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 October 2007
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Heap Brow Heap Bridge Bury Lancashire BL9 7JP

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Heap Bridge Primary School is much smaller than average. It serves a village community. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage and they have a range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one Reception group. Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are taught in mixed-age classes. The school has received the Sports Activemark award. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2008.

The school's after-school club is run by a private provider. There is a separate report on this provision, available on the Ofsted website.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Heap Bridge is a satisfactory school with a number of good features. It has key strengths in the clear-sighted leadership of the headteacher and the personal development of pupils. All pupils are equally valued and well cared for and they say they enjoy their lessons and out-of-school activities. This is reflected in their above average attendance, positive attitudes and good behaviour. It is also shared by parents, who are very supportive of the school. Typical comments included, 'this is a happy school and there is a lot of investment in pupils' learning and development'.

Even though leadership and management are satisfactory overall, the new headteacher's decisive leadership is beginning to empower staff at all levels. As a result staff morale is high and teamwork is effective. By rigorously monitoring and evaluating work in the classroom he has ensured that teaching has improved and this now leads to satisfactory or better learning. The senior leadership team support the headteacher well and is instrumental to the improvements the school is making. Subject leaders do not yet have a good understanding of what they have to do in order to raise standards. This limits the ability for all to contribute to school improvement. However, some individual leaders are well informed and knowledgeable and have a good overview of their areas, which enables them to strengthen provision and improve standards. The governing body provides positive support and is carrying out its role as a 'critical friend' with increasing effectiveness.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress and develop positive attitudes to learning. Subsequent progress is satisfactory and the pupils' standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly average. The school has turned a corner and there is clear evidence of improvement across the school, but there remains some variation in the progress made by different year groups. This is because the quality of teaching, although satisfactory overall, is not consistent across the school. Staff training and changes to classroom practice are already making a visible difference. Academic guidance has improved and pupils know their targets and how to improve their work further.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has rightly focused on developing the key skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) to raise standards. However, opportunities to provide more exciting and challenging ways for pupils to improve their numeracy and literacy skills across a range of subjects are underdeveloped. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in the wide range of additional activities, which add interest and enjoyment and support pupils' personal development well. The school takes its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils very seriously and as a result, pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and healthy. Staff know their pupils well and take great pains to support them when they need help, including the involvement of agencies outside the school. The school's assessment system regularly gathers accurate and reliable information about what pupils have learned. This information is now being used effectively to ensure that pupils increase their rate of progress. Having made satisfactory progress in addressing all areas identified for improvement at the last inspection, the school has satisfactory capacity to secure further improvements and gives satisfactory value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children in Reception thrive in the secure environment and this helps them develop positive attitudes to learning. 'My child has settled very well and can't wait to come to school', was typical of parents' comments. When they join Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills generally match those typical for their age, although there is a wide range of ability. Children enthusiastically take part in a good range of stimulating and fun learning activities which meets their needs well. They enjoy dressing up and acting out stories and such practical approaches increase children's capacity to concentrate for extended periods of time. Consequently, children make good progress in all areas of learning from their starting points, especially in language, communication and personal development. They develop independence, share equipment sensibly and behave well. Assessment of children's progress is continually being reviewed to ensure there is appropriate challenge for different needs. Leadership and management are good. Staff are constantly looking to see how they can improve provision further and are currently working to develop the outdoor learning environment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning so it matches the best practice in school.
- Develop the curriculum to provide more exciting and challenging opportunities for pupils to consolidate and improve their key basic skills across a range of subjects.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they become more skilled in monitoring and evaluating the progress made by pupils in their subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average standards but this can vary from year to year. Inspection evidence and provisional results of 2008 national tests show that by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards were average overall. Pupils made satisfactory progress overall. The school's reliable tracking system and pupils' books show that pupils are now beginning to make good progress. However, this progress has yet to be sustained over time, and so is not yet reflected in higher standards overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to others because of the effective support they receive.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are strengths of the school. Pupils enjoy the school's positive environment and this helps them develop good attitudes to learning and to behave well. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and they treat each other well. 'Everyone's kind at Heap Bridge,' agreed a group of pupils. Older pupils readily take on additional responsibilities such as looking after younger ones in the playground. Members of the school council have set up and manage the school tuck shop. They show maturity and sensitivity when they consider ways to help vulnerable pupils at playtime. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are thoughtful and reflective; from a young age they

consider important issues, such as how to be fair and how their actions can affect other people. Rates of attendance are above average and staff work hard to maintain this trend. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy because the school promotes this well. For example, there are many opportunities for physical activity and the school has been awarded the Activemark for the last three years. Pupils leave adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching is now satisfactory in its effect because it is taking time to close the gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge created by previous staffing disruption. Improvements in the monitoring of teaching and learning have resulted in the vast majority of lessons being at least satisfactory. Overall, lessons have a clear focus and pupils generally understand what is expected of them. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a big difference to the quality and pace of pupils' learning. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school varies. The best practice is not sufficiently shared between teachers in order to improve teaching further. In the best lessons, teachers and pupils share the task of evaluating learning and this informs future planning. Learning gets off to a brisk pace and teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. However, in a very small minority of lessons the pace of learning slackens. This is because learning activities do not have the same degree of challenge. Therefore, not all pupils make as much progress as they could.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school's emphasis on developing basic skills, particularly literacy and numeracy, is beginning to impact on achievement in English and mathematics and enables pupils, including those with learning difficulties/and or disabilities to make satisfactory progress. Younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are supported well in their learning by the 'hands on' activities in the mixed-age classrooms. Curriculum activities help pupils make good progress in their personal development and well-being. A range of interesting additional activities supports pupils' learning well. Enrichment days help to develop creative talents as seen in the attractive artwork around school. Having acknowledged the need for developments in its overall curriculum provision, the school is devising a broader, more creative curriculum. However, at present, the provision is in a state of change and has yet to be fully organised in a way which creates the most effective links between subjects.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good quality of the school's care, guidance and support is firmly reflected in its very positive caring environment and the good attitudes and behaviour of pupils. All staff have a high concern for the welfare of their pupils. Every child is made to feel they matter. Pupils feel safe and well cared for because rules are established and security is a high priority. Consequently, this is a happy and orderly school. Pupils respond well to the strong advice from adults about keeping fit, healthy and safe. Protection procedures for pupils, adult vetting and risk assessments are in place. Systems for tracking pupils' academic achievement are thorough. They identify those

who need extra support and set appropriate targets for improvement. Marking usually acknowledges pupils' efforts and achievements as well as indicating what they must do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The new headteacher and staff share a clear commitment to raising standards. They have worked well to steer the school successfully through a challenging period. This is resulting in better achievement overall. However, it is currently too soon for the strong impetus to be demonstrated in sustained success. The school has carried out an accurate evaluation of what it needs to do to improve academic achievement. It is setting challenging targets and standards are beginning to rise. For example, Year 5 pupils are currently being well prepared for Year 6 and are making good progress towards their targets. Subject leaders are beginning to develop skills to enable them to make an effective contribution to school improvement but recognise that they do not all have sufficient influence over the provision for their subjects. Nevertheless, good partnerships and other community links are contributing well to the quality of education that pupils receive. The school is taking decisive action to promote community cohesion. Teaching and the curriculum are used well to help pupils learn and understand about other communities. Links with a school in a contrasting community are developing. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas it needs to work on. Its members are beginning to question the school about its results more closely.



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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**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/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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**

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me. I very much enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons.

I found that Heap Bridge Primary is a satisfactory and improving school which is no longer required to make significant improvements. These are what I judged to be strengths in your school.

- Your headteacher and all staff are making sure that your school keeps improving.
- The Reception class helps you make a good start to your learning.
- You have good knowledge of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise to keep yourself fit.
- You enjoy school and feel safe because adults take good care of you.
- Your school has good systems for checking that you make enough progress every year.
- You are developing into sensible young people.

I feel that the school could do even better, so I have asked the headteacher and other leaders to:

- make sure that teachers share ideas about how they can help you make even better progress
- improve how lessons are linked together so that the skills and knowledge you learn in one subject can be used and developed further in a different subject
- give greater responsibility to those teachers who lead subjects, for checking the learning that goes on in other classrooms.

You can help with these improvements by continuing to come to school as often as you do now, and by remaining the happy and smiling young people you already are.