

# Ridgeway Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119983
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327169
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	306
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	43
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bernard Besbrode
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Fox
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2005
<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>	The Ridgeway Market Harborough LE16 7HQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01858 465800
<b>Fax number</b>	01858 461849

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

progress in mathematics, especially for lower attaining pupils

pupils' relationships with adults and each other, and the way that the school supports their enjoyment by making learning fun

the impact of leadership on improving academic support.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

Most pupils come to this larger than average sized primary school from the town of Market Harborough. The proportion identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average as is the number eligible for free school meals. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are taught in one Reception class in the autumn term and then in two classes in the spring and summer terms when they have all been admitted.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is moving forward at a steady pace under the clear direction of the headteacher. Adults support pupils' good personal development well and there is a good focus on meeting the school's aim to provide 'Enjoyment in Learning'. Teachers plan exciting activities that make learning fun and bring subjects alive. This means that pupils thoroughly enjoy school and arrive each day with smiling faces.

Satisfactory teaching means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Nevertheless, there are good features to teaching across the school. Teachers are hard working and enthusiastic. They manage pupils' behaviour well and make good use of resources such as interactive whiteboards to teach new skills. Visits contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. For example, pupils responded very positively to their Tudor visitors on the day of the inspection. In the EYFS, differing needs are met especially well ensuring that children make good progress and this means that standards rise to above average by the start of Year 1. Although there is some variation from year to year, above-average standards are maintained through to the end of Year 6, reflecting satisfactory progress from their starting points for most pupils. Pupils make the best progress in English, especially writing, because they get many opportunities to write in different subjects and basic skills are introduced systematically. In mathematics, the school has rightly identified that there are occasions when work is not pitched at the right level, especially for lower attaining pupils, slowing their progress. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged well in English and mathematics but less so in science, where too often pupils complete the same piece of work whatever their prior learning.

Parents are rightly pleased with the good quality of care, guidance and support given to their children. All adults in the school give the pupils' pastoral support the highest priority and they do this well. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with adults; as one pupil said, 'At Ridgeway we're all one big family.' Pupils are polite and courteous and generally behave well. They are enthusiastic in lessons and work hard. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, and they keenly take responsibility outside lessons by taking on roles such as team leader or road safety officer. In lessons, pupils' independence is less well developed because they do not get enough opportunities to think for themselves, to reflect on their work and to try out their own ideas. For example, opportunities for pupils to use and apply their good scientific knowledge to practical activities and the use of numeracy in different subjects are relatively underdeveloped. These comparative weaknesses in the otherwise good curriculum have already been identified by the school as a way of improving standards further. Pupils produce high quality work in art, such as the super oil and pastel self-portraits on display in a Year 5 classroom.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community by raising funds for charities and through the hard working school council. This gives pupils a good voice and contributes well to school development. Playground helpers carry out their roles conscientiously and help to make playtimes a calm time when pupils of different ages play together happily. Activities such as these, as well as their generally good confidence and self-esteem, ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. The school has rightly been focusing on teaching pupils about their place in the wider world and this has ensured that its contribution to community cohesion is good. Pupils take a good part in local events and have a good knowledge of life in multicultural Britain.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a relatively new senior management team but the well-respected headteacher is doing the right things to improve the school. His commitment to ensuring that pupils are happy at school is reflected in all aspects of its work. The school has shown in the way that it has raised standards in writing and improved academic support since the last inspection that there is a sound capacity to improve further. The good use of challenging targets and success criteria means that pupils have a good understanding of how to improve in English and mathematics. This has been a key factor in recent improvements in national test results. Teachers are beginning to make sharper use of information about how well pupils are doing to plan the next stage of learning but this is not yet consistent across the school, resulting in progress still being too uneven from year to year.

The school has satisfactory systems for evaluating effectiveness although some, but not all, judgements are over generous. The headteacher takes on too many responsibilities for confirming how well the school is doing. Middle managers are keen and are committed to raising standards but they do not yet have a strong enough role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for themselves so that they can check on the effectiveness of their work and pick up inconsistencies in provision more quickly. Governors are supportive and they are rightly developing their own monitoring systems so that they can do more to hold the school to account and to provide challenge.

There is a strong partnership between home and school and the school has good links with outside agencies. Parents hold the school in high regard and make a significant contribution to its work by raising funds and helping their children at home, especially with reading. Parents typically say of the school that 'there is a very happy and supportive environment in which to learn' and 'my child is really happy and members of staff are always positive'. Comments such as these successfully capture the main strengths of this improving school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well in the Reception Year because teaching is good, and their welfare and care are given a very high priority. Good use is made of both the indoors and outdoors to make learning interesting and to respond to pupils' differing interests. Consequently, whilst most children start school working at the levels typically expected for their age, standards rise to above average by the start of Year 1. Children make especially good progress in personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy. Adults help children quickly to develop independence and confidence and they learn to play with and help each other. This means that there is a happy and purposeful atmosphere in lessons throughout the day. The teaching of letter sounds is systematic and means that children quickly acquire early reading and writing skills. Induction arrangements when children begin school are good and adults do a lot to develop a strong home school partnership from the start. For example, parents are given good quality information each day about what their children have been learning. Good leadership and management ensure that provision is reviewed regularly and clear action taken as needed. Leaders are making increasingly good use of data and profiles of children's learning to measure progress over time so that any minor areas for development can be identified even more quickly.

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

- Ensure that teachers always pitch work at the right level for all pupils, especially the less able in mathematics and the more able in science.

- Give middle managers more responsibility for checking on the quality of teaching and learning and provide challenge to senior leaders.
- Give pupils more opportunities to develop and use research and investigative skills, especially in science and mathematics.

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.

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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	2
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

<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	2

## 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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

30 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ridgeway Primary School, Market Harborough, LE16 7HQ

Thank you for being so welcoming and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking to you. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

- Some of the things we found out about your school.
- You make good progress in the Reception Year. You settle well, develop good confidence, and quickly learn to read and write.
- Satisfactory teaching means that you are making steady progress in Years 1 to 6. At the moment, you do slightly better in English than in mathematics.
- You enjoy school and usually behave well. You have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and make a good contribution to the community.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be and you are able to take part in lots of fun activities out of lessons. The Tudor Day for pupils in Years 3 and 4 looked as if it was great fun!
- All adults in school are kind and caring, and they look after you well. They set you targets in English and mathematics that help you understand how to improve your work.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are working hard to improve the school and know what they still need to do.
- Most of your parents or carers are pleased you come to this school and they support it well.
- What we have asked your school to do now:
  - make sure that teachers always pitch work at the right level for all pupils in mathematics and science
  - give you more opportunities to learn how to carry out research and investigations
  - give leaders, other than the headteacher, more time to check how well you are being taught so that they can find out what to do next to improve your work.

We thoroughly enjoyed watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard and being sensible in all lessons.

Yours faithfully

Mike Capper Lead inspector