

# Ridgeway Primary School

Inspection report - amended

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124214
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	328081
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Walsh

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)	283
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>	Pam Potter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanna Jelves
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 January 2006
<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>	Grange Road Chasetown Burntwood WS7 4TU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 510470
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 510475

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 January 2009
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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report amended due to a change to the report following a complaint

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is slightly larger than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average but the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups and very few speak English as an additional language. The school has been awarded a permanent Eco green flag, and Active Mark Gold. There has been some staff turbulence in recent years involving the absence of some senior managers. The school provides Early Years Foundation Stage Provision through its two Reception classes. Ridgeway Sunbeams operates from premises within the school providing day care, nursery education, a breakfast and after school club managed by a sub committee of the school governors. This provision was inspected separately at the same time as the primary school. There is also a privately managed day nursery operating from purpose-built premises within the school grounds which was also inspected separately at the same time as the primary school.

## 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 rapidly improving. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has created a palpable team spirit and as a result, staff are working extremely hard and eagerly embracing new ideas. The school has pinpointed exactly where it needs to improve and responded with well thought out plans that are being carefully implemented. Although much has been achieved, leadership and management are satisfactory overall because the unavoidable absence of key members of the senior management team has inevitably slowed the rate of improvement in some areas of the school's work. The school's satisfactory capacity to improve is demonstrated through significant improvements to the quality of teaching and learning which is now starting to cause achievement to accelerate.

Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Reception classes. They continue to make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the end of year 6 they are reaching broadly average standards though fewer pupils than average reach the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics. Teaching and learning are satisfactory; however, they are quickly improving with an increasing proportion of good lessons and some outstanding teaching in Year 6. Work is usually well matched to pupils' needs and many lessons are exciting and capture pupils' interests well. Occasionally teachers talk for too long and this limits pupils' opportunities for working independently and practising their skills. Although many teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning they are not deployed effectively in all lessons.

Care, guidance and support are good and successfully promote pupils' good personal development and well-being. The good attention paid to personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are well informed about how to stay healthy and safe. Safeguarding requirements are met. Not only are pupils well cared for, they are offered good academic guidance. Very effective programmes have resulted in less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities making up lost ground and consequently, their progress is good.

Good links with parents, the community, external agencies and other education providers help to improve the opportunities available to pupils. Most parents are very pleased with what the school has to offer, typically saying, their children are 'very happy at Ridgeway'. Pupils' obvious enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance rates. Parents and pupils particularly appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport that enrich the satisfactory curriculum and the good opportunities for family learning. The school works very well with the local community and there is a strong commitment to the extended school agenda. However the school's promotion of community cohesion is only satisfactory because pupils have limited opportunities to make contact with people from a range of different backgrounds and ethnicities and this restricts their understanding of diversity. Nevertheless, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and this is reflected in their good behaviour and the way they work so well together.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Last year the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage was affected by staff absence and, as a result, children's learning slowed and children entered Year 1 with skills that were well below age-related expectations. Staffing issues have been resolved, children are once again

making appropriate progress and provision for children's welfare and learning and development is now securely satisfactory. Parents are very happy with the provision. They say that their children have 'settled well' because of good induction procedures and many comment on the 'friendly smiling staff' who work hard and make sure that children like school.

Children have good opportunities to learn through play and they develop independence. Although there is a suitable choice of activities, boys often choose to play with wheeled toys, building blocks and computers and they are less involved in those activities that would more effectively promote their literacy and numeracy. Teachers and support staff have a lovely manner and talk to children in a way that encourages them to develop their thinking skills and vocabulary. Occasionally, children are left to work on an activity for too long without adult support. Children's learning is regularly assessed and the information obtained is used well to plan the curriculum. Satisfactory leadership and management have ensured that the welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage have been met and that provision continues to improve.

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

- Ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Make certain that teachers do not talk for too long, give pupils sufficient opportunities to work independently, and that teaching assistants are always effectively deployed.
- Provide pupils with greater opportunities to meet others from more ethnically diverse backgrounds.

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**

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 improved in 2008 and were just above average but standards have not yet improved to the same extent at the end of Key Stage 2 and remain broadly average with too few pupils reaching the higher levels. Although achievement is satisfactory in both key stages, it is improving. It varies between satisfactory and good in different subjects and in different classes and years.

The school recognises that there was a significant dip in achievement in lower Key Stage 2 in the past and as a result, pupils in the current Years 5 and 6 have gaps in their learning. School leaders have started to tackle this issue successfully by improving the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils who are now in Years 3 and 4 are making at least satisfactory progress. However, it has been harder for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to catch up, despite the particularly good progress being made in Year 6. Successful intervention programmes have helped to fill these gaps for less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but the school is aware that more able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable, particularly in writing and mathematics. For example, many older pupils produce exciting pieces of writing and use interesting words, but they are held back by the lack of technical accuracy. This often includes the standard of their spellings and grammar.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Strong moral and social development underpins pupils' good behaviour. They have developed a clear sense of right and wrong. Pupils work hard in lessons and enjoy opportunities to work together in pairs and groups. Pupils are aware of White British culture because they have good opportunities to experience the theatre and take part in musical activities. However, some have a limited perception of the wide variety of cultures that make up today's British society.

Pupils develop a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They make healthy choices of food and participate well in sports and after-school clubs. They know how to keep safe and who to talk to about a problem. However, a small number of parents are concerned about bullying. Pupils report that there is little bullying and say that when fallings-out occur, 'the headteacher sorts it'. Pupils take their considerable responsibilities very seriously and are pleased to be able to make a good contribution not only to the school community, but also to the wider community through their involvement in projects that include older people. Confidence and positive attitudes to learning combined with average standards in basic skills ensure that pupils are adequately prepared for their next stage of education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning have improved substantially because staff have taken on board advice from senior leaders and the local authority. New ways of working have now become embedded in the practice of the majority of teachers. Even though teaching and learning are satisfactory overall there is an increasing amount of good and outstanding teaching and learning, stemming from teachers' hard work, commitment and rapidly developing skills. Most teachers prepare very well and plan lessons that are based on their thorough analysis of pupils' previous learning.

Although the amount of challenge for more-able pupils is increasing, occasionally these pupils could be set even harder work. The good attention paid to specialist vocabulary in literacy and mathematics is developing pupils' understanding in these subjects. Teachers are good at supporting pupils' personal development and offer good opportunities for pupils to work together and learn from one another. Pupils who do not behave well are usually extremely well managed. Occasionally teachers talk for too long and pupils can grow restless. This limits the time pupils have to practise and develop their skills through practical activities. Teaching assistants are often very skilled and make a good contribution in most lessons but there are times when their skills are not sufficiently utilised by teachers.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and enables pupils to make satisfactory progress. It is rapidly improving as a result of a greater emphasis on developing pupils' skills. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad and balanced. It is enriched through the opportunities to learn French and specialist teaching for physical education and music. Improvements to the teaching of the basics of literacy have resulted in better outcomes for pupils in English, particularly in Years 3 and 4. The mathematics curriculum is developing well with a strong focus on calculation and already achievement in mathematics is accelerating. The curriculum is successful in making

learning accessible for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The challenge for more able pupils has improved but is still inconsistent. Many pupils enjoy the wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as the choir, outdoor adventure activities, the gardening club and the opportunities to take part in arts projects.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a warm, compassionate environment where pupils' personal needs are well supported. Consequently, pupils are very happy in school and are able to make satisfactory progress. Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Support for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is much improved and is now good. Links with external agencies are effective. Targets on individual education plans are far more precise and better support successful learning than they did in the past. Very good tracking means that pupils who are falling behind are quickly identified and offered valuable support and this has accelerated the achievement of many pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult. Academic guidance is good in most classes. Work is usually well marked. The increasing involvement of pupils in assessing their own work and checking the work of their classmates means that they know exactly where to make improvements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher's vision and determination, combined with the hard work and commitment of the whole staff team, have already led to improvements in many areas of the school's work despite setbacks including the absence of several key members of staff. The monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and this has allowed senior leaders and subject coordinators to accurately identify where improvements need to be made. The skills of middle managers are developing well and they are particularly good at identifying gaps in pupils' learning by analysing assessment results. The tracking of pupils' progress is much improved and the outcomes are used very effectively to hold teachers to account and this has helped to raise their expectations. The school's targets for achievement are increasingly challenging.

The school is very committed to promoting equality by making sure that all pupils have equal access to all the school has to offer. Currently some groups of pupils do better than others, but school leaders are not complacent. The close focus on personal learning requirements is rapidly improving this situation. There are strong links with the local community, parents and carers. However there are fewer links with the wider British community and links with the world community are just beginning to take shape. Governors are extremely supportive and ably fulfil their role as a critical friend, providing challenge when necessary.

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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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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	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

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

30 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ridgeway Primary School, Chasetown WS7 4TU

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we came to inspect your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listened very carefully to what you had to say. I am writing to tell you what we found out. Your school is satisfactory and it is getting better all the time. We were pleased to see that you all behave well and work hard in class. You know how to keep fit and healthy and you enjoy your physical education and sport. It is great that you are able to learn how to play the violin and have lots of theatre visits and thrilling outdoor adventures. We know that you are getting to meet lots of people from your own community, especially through the arts projects, but we have asked your teachers to provide more opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds.

You are making satisfactory progress and it is improving. The standards you reach are very similar to those reached by pupils in other schools but we think that the more able amongst you could do even better in your writing and mathematics. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving, and many of your lessons now help you to learn more quickly. We did notice that in a few lessons you had to listen to the teacher for too long, so we have asked your teachers to improve this and also to make sure that teaching assistants are always used well to support your learning.

We were very impressed by the way you are learning to check your own work and the work of others because this is helping you to see exactly where you need to improve. I really enjoyed reading some of your exciting stories because you are using lots of interesting words and often have a great sense of humour. You told us that the staff look after you very well and we agree. The people who run your school do a satisfactory job. They are working very hard and are making your school a better place.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector