

# Bridlewood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	134134
<b>Local authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	381618
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	237
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jayne Keene
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jo Garton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24–25 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Chartwell Road Swindon SN25 2EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 706830
<b>Fax number</b>	01793 705643
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	21–22 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	381618



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Merchant

Additional inspector

Sharona Semlali

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Fifteen lessons were observed and nine of these were carried out jointly with senior staff, amounting to seven hours and thirty minutes in total. All 9 classroom teachers and higher level teaching assistants present in school at the time of the inspection were observed teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the plans for improvement, assessment information, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information and a range of school policies. In addition, the work of a range of pupils in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6 was scrutinised. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires received from 70 parents and carers, 69 pupils and 13 staff.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average, whilst that of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has a breakfast and after-school club which is managed by the governing body and was part of this inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Bridlewood Primary School is a good school. It has improved significantly since its previous inspection and most pupils make good progress thanks to consistently good teaching and their good attitudes to their learning. Consequently, the school has a good capacity to improve. The school is not outstanding because there is not yet enough outstanding teaching to lift pupils' attainment in English and mathematics to the next level.
- Pupils achieve well and by the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is above average. A relentless focus on teaching sounds and letters ensures that by the age of six, nearly all pupils are confident readers. Progress overall falls short of outstanding, however, because initiatives to improve writing and number skills are not always applied consistently enough across all year groups.
- Teaching is typically good, and sometimes outstanding. Teachers display very good subject knowledge, give clear explanations, and expect much of their pupils. However, in some lessons, pupils are given insufficient time to work independently, and sometimes tasks do not provide maximum challenge for the more-able pupils to ensure they reach the higher levels in their work.
- Pupils have a strong understanding of right and wrong, behave well, feel safe and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured well. Pupils' personal development is good because they are encouraged to see their potential and are given the self-confidence to work hard and aim high.
- The school's success has undoubtedly been brought about by the dynamic leadership of the headteacher. With strong support from her extended leadership team, she has ensured that all have very clear shared vision of high-quality provision. School leaders check the quality of teaching and manage performance rigorously and provide constructive advice and training to staff. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning, and consequently pupils' achievement, is constantly improving.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
  - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging

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- them to be more active and inquisitive in class
- making sure that teachers plan for and extend the learning of the more-able pupils at a consistently challenging pace throughout lessons.
- Accelerate pupils' progress even further across all year groups by ensuring that effective techniques to teach reading, writing and mathematics are employed consistently in all classes.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children get a good start in the Reception classes and make good progress in all the areas of learning because teaching is consistently good. The good focus on children learning the sounds that letters, and combinations of letters make (phonics) means they are well prepared for reading and they gain a real enthusiasm for stories and books. In an excellent Reception class lesson, for example, pupils made rapid progress in developing their reading skills. They were enthralled by the teacher's expert and lively use of sounds to help them deduce simple three-letter, then more complex, words left behind by an alien visitor.

In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of phonics continues to be of high priority and consequently attainment in reading is above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate that they have acquired good strategies to tackle unfamiliar words in their reading books and have gained a good level of independence in their reading. This pattern continues throughout the school so that by the end of Year 6, reading is of a high standard, with a high proportion of pupils reaching above average levels. Teachers encourage pupils to experiment with vocabulary and imagery so that they develop a feel for words.

A very large majority of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires rightly felt that their children were making good progress at the school, and that their needs were very well met. Inspectors found that the quality of learning in the great majority of lessons observed was good, and sometimes outstanding. Pupils' number skills, in particular, have improved markedly since the previous inspection, and most are confident in solving number problems. Plans to teach writing more effectively, such as through raising awareness of the differences between formal and informal language, are now embedding. Where these initiatives are applied diligently, as in Years 5 and 6, many pupils make outstanding gains in writing and mathematics. However, some inconsistencies in application across some other classes prevent progress from being better than good.

The school works very effectively to support pupils who enter the school mid-way through the year. Detailed plans to support these groups and timely interventions ensure that they make similar progress to that of their classmates. Comprehensive systems are used to assess and track pupils' progress. Very detailed records enable leaders and teachers to keep a close check on how individuals and groups of pupils are doing. Assessment records show that any differences in performance between

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boys and girls are quickly closed. Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Staff are quick to identify pupils' individual needs and appropriate interventions are put in place. Teachers and teaching assistants provide effective support and challenge. They help pupils by demonstrating skills precisely and teaching specialist vocabulary.

### **Quality of teaching**

The great majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire think that the teaching is good in the school. Inspectors agree. Typically, teaching is lively, tasks and concepts are clearly explained and activities are carefully designed to challenge the pupils to learn at a swift pace. Teachers mark books and set targets for improvement thoughtfully and carefully. Pupils are keen to do their best, work purposefully in lessons and greatly enjoy what they are doing. For instance, in an exciting Year 4 French lesson, pupils learnt at a blistering pace because of the teacher's high expectations of what she wanted them to learn. All groups of pupils made fast progress and really enjoyed working competitively in groups to recall the days of the week and describe the weather in French. However, this is not always the case and in some lessons the more-able pupils are not consistently challenged. Learning and progress are sometimes held back because teachers talk too much and over-direct the tasks pupils undertake. This limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning and results in slower progress and less time for pupils to articulate what they have learnt.

The curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' progress, in particular the many opportunities offered across different subjects for pupils to refine their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Curriculum themes are used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils developed their understanding of other cultures through the theme of 'People Who Changed the World,' by exploring information in books and the internet, in guided reading and literacy lessons.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour of pupils in the lessons observed was at least good. A few parents and carers expressed concerns that their children's lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour, although the great majority felt that overall the behaviour in the school was good. The school's own records show that behaviour in lessons has been consistently good over a period of time. The procedures that the school has in place to deal with any incidents that might occur are comprehensive and records show these to be effective in preventing any disruption to other pupils' learning. Pupils have positive attitudes towards school and their learning. There are strong relationships between the pupils and adults in the school and a mutual respect clearly exists between them. Attendance is above average and the school has worked hard with the tiny minority of pupils who find punctuality a problem, so that this has improved greatly. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare. They clearly understand that there are different types of bullying and are confident that any bullying would be

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dealt with effectively. Pupils say that they feel safe. They are taught how to keep themselves safe and an 'internet safety' project has ensured that pupils have a good awareness of the dangers of social network sites on the internet. Parents and carers also firmly believe that their children are safe at school.

The breakfast and after-school clubs exemplify the warm, stimulating, high quality care given to pupils. The caring ethos of the school is evident in all the school's actions and interactions between staff and pupils. Pupils relish responsibility and eagerly take advantage of the many opportunities to participate in a wide range of after-school events and are very well informed about other people's needs.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher has a clear and unwavering vision for the school which is supported and implemented by all staff. She communicates her high expectations persuasively, so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team. Consequently, all aspects of the school have improved since the previous inspection.

School leaders keep thorough checks on all aspects of school performance and manage the quality of teaching well. The senior team use their excellent coaching and mentoring skills to offer constructive advice and training, and use their most effective teachers particularly well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is steadily improving.

The governing body holds the school to account for its work well and has been influential in helping senior managers secure effective school improvement. Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school's work. For instance, checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and meet current requirements.

School leaders have ensured that the exciting and well-planned curriculum is well thought out so that pupils from all backgrounds can enjoy learning and achieve well and it successfully promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are taught to be thoughtful and reflective and consider the needs of others. The school works extremely well in partnership with other schools and with external agencies to secure extra support for those pupils who need it. In this highly inclusive school, every child matters and individual needs are considered very specifically. The school promotes equality and ensures that there is no discrimination by carefully tracking the progress of all groups of pupils so that there are no gaps and all groups make good progress.

Even though the school has many good features, staff and the governing body are not complacent and want to speed pupils' progress even further. They know exactly what actions to take next as a result of thorough systems of school self-evaluation. In view of the strong improvements made to provision and pupils' outcomes in the last three years, the school's capacity to improve further is good.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Bridlewood Primary School, Swindon SN25 2EX**

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We really enjoyed meeting and talking to you. You go to a good school that is improving quickly. It has many good features and you are right to be proud of it. Here are some of the good things we found out about Bridlewood Primary School.

- You make good progress as you move through the school and you achieve well. By the time you leave at the end of Year 6, your attainment is higher than that of pupils in most other schools. This is because you work hard and you receive good teaching.
- Your teachers and other adults take good care of you. You told us they make sure that everyone feels completely safe and secure.
- You behave well around the school and in your classes and you look after each other so well. You relish working in groups and helping each other to learn and you readily help your classmates when they find things difficult.
- Your headteacher, the governing body and all the other staff know in detail how to make sure that your school continues to improve.

To help the school improve further, we have asked those who lead and manage the school to do two things.

- In lessons, ensure that all teachers plan your work more carefully so that it is better matched to pupils' different abilities and make sure that you are able to learn more things on your own.
- Make sure that more of you make even faster progress in your learning by ensuring that all the things the school does to improve your reading, writing and mathematics are done equally well in all classes.

I am sure that you will all help them by always working hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant  
Lead inspector

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