

# Butterknowle Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114102
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	378794
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kate Pringle

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>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jeanette Newell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Ruane
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Butterknowle Bishop Auckland DL13 5PB
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kate Pringle

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Six lessons and four teachers were observed. The inspector also observed shorter sessions of support interventions for pupils and listened to reading. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. The views of pupils and staff were considered, together with those of parents and carers in the 19 questionnaires they returned. There were no parent views expressed in the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) with which to aid the planning of the inspection.

## Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are presently no pupils in Year 2 and the number of pupils in year groups can vary considerably. At present, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are no pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. Although the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities, who are supported by the school without input from external agencies, is below average, the proportion who receive external support or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Government floor targets are met.

A reduction in staffing at the start of the 2011/12 academic year has meant that there are now only two classes; one serving the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the other serving Key Stage 2. Breakfast and after-school clubs are run by the school.

The school currently holds the International Schools award. It is a Bronze level Eco-school and holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy School status.

**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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils, parents and carers are positive about the school and most reflect upon the good relationships with staff and the high level of care and support given to their children. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Pupils make satisfactory progress and leave Year 6 with average attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make at least satisfactory progress, with some that is good.
- Teaching is largely satisfactory, including that in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There have been improvements in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics and as a result, progress is rising for all pupils. Teachers do not always have sufficiently high expectations for pupils and activities can lack challenge. Marking of work is better in writing than in mathematics, but it is not always used effectively to make it clear to pupils how to progress to higher levels.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy coming to school and interact well with each other and with adults. Attendance is high with very low levels of persistent absence. Pupils feel very safe. There has been a decline in the proportion of pupils who misbehave as a result of a strong emphasis upon personal development, work with families and effective behaviour management systems which are understood well by pupils.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. Actions to improve the quality of teaching are starting to have an impact. Although there is still a way to go to secure consistency, there are positive signs of improving pupils' performance. A supportive governing body works closely with the headteacher to understand how well the school is improving and what needs to be done to secure improving standards.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise attainment in English and in mathematics by:
  - using assessment information to track pupils' progress and secure consistently good progress
  - raising expectations of pupils' achievement by clearly demonstrating what is expected of different ability groups
  - extending opportunities for the use of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) across other subjects.
  
- Improve the consistency of teaching to be good or better by:
  - increasing the pace of lessons
  - increasing opportunities for practical, investigative and creative activities, including for those children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
  - ensuring that marking and feedback to pupils provide more opportunities for pupils to correct previous work
  - providing the next steps in learning when pupils achieve a particular goal.
  
- Extending the monitoring and evaluating roles of leaders and managers by:
  - raising expectations of the quality of teaching and learning
  - improving knowledge and understanding of good practice by observation of good and better provision
  - providing identified management time for leaders to observe, monitor and evaluate.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Numbers in cohorts vary considerably and this strongly affects attainment and progress data. Over time, entry levels to Reception class are broadly average, although these can vary from year to year. Children make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 with average attainment. Satisfactory progress over Key Stages 1 and 2 means that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is now average. Gaps in performance between the school and the national average have narrowed in both mathematics and English. Overall, pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach average levels in reading.

Pupils' learning and performance in lessons is satisfactory overall and improving in response to new teaching strategies. Pupils want to please their teachers. They are keen to learn and work hard to complete tasks. Present data support better current progress and increased attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the pace of this improvement is slower than it might be. Expectations in lessons for

pupils' differing abilities are not always high enough and this leads to pupils not making as much progress as they could. Similarly, pupils do not move on to the next steps at a fast enough rate because teachers do not make it clear what these steps are and provide opportunities to correct work. On the other hand, when pupils of lower ability, and those with special educational needs or with disabilities, are taught in targeted interventions their progress accelerates. This is reflected in their improved performance and their progress which is in line with other pupils and for some their progress is good or better. Pupils are well supported by their parents and carers who feel that their children make good progress. Although the inspection identified improvements to progress, it is satisfactory overall.

## Quality of teaching

Parents and carers believe that their children are taught well. Inspection evidence found that teaching is satisfactory overall with some good teaching developing. In the Reception class, a range of activities supports children's development and staff provide opportunities for children to access outside learning as much as possible, given the restrictions of the building. Regular assessments are made but these are not used sufficiently well to influence teachers' planning on a daily basis to match work to individual needs and interests.

Over Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching is mostly satisfactory. When teaching is good, modelling and high expectations challenge pupils' knowledge and understanding. Practical tasks engage pupils and challenge thinking. Pupils enjoy such lessons and engage with increased enthusiasm. This was evident in lessons led by a specialist teacher for control technology visiting the school. Motivation was high and progress was good with pupils enjoying the challenge. Opportunities to use motion sensors and to create simple control programs enabled pupils to use new knowledge practically and creatively. Pupils progress more slowly in lessons where teachers' expectations are not high enough and teachers talk for too long, not allowing enough opportunities for independent learning. Too few lessons provide pupils with activities to investigate and use their abilities to practise their skills. Teachers effectively use learning objectives to identify the lesson task for pupils to achieve. However, in English and mathematics activities do not link closely enough to pupils' individual targets to enable pupils to achieve them.

The revised curriculum is aiding teachers to raise expectations and build more closely on previous learning. Although expectations are not always high enough, more activities are being planned to capture pupils' interest including visits, visitors and additional activities after school. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their skills of reading, writing and mathematics across other subjects and insufficient differentiation of task to meet the needs of differing abilities. Teaching enhances successfully pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, pupils made considerable gains in their cultural understanding through residential exchanges with a French school. They are taught the importance of caring and in response show a very good understanding of right and wrong. This is reflected in the quality of their behaviour and relationships with other children and with adults.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils speak confidently about feeling safe in school and who to turn to if they have concerns. They learn to consider the consequences of actions and reflect upon their impact upon the lives of themselves and others. Pupils relate that bullying is not a problem in school now. They tell of instances of verbal bullying in the past and how staff responded to their concerns by addressing the actions of individual pupils. The vast majority of pupils, parents and carers have positive views about the quality of behaviour in school and how this has improved over time. This is reflected in pupils' enjoyment and the consistently high levels of attendance. Where parental questionnaires indicated some concerns about poor behaviour and bullying, these were followed up during the inspection whilst maintaining confidentiality. The school successfully works in tandem with a range of outside agencies to instigate strategies to deal with individual pupils who may cause concerns because of circumstances that make them vulnerable. Good use is made of the parent support adviser who interacts closely with families to support the work of the school and assures good behaviour and positive application to work. Present behaviour in the school was seen to be good both in class and in more informal situations, at lunch and at playtimes. Pupils engage well with each other as they share and take turns with no confrontations.

## **Leadership and management**

Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory progress against the areas for improvement. Action to improve the use of assessment and better marking has been slow to show an effect and remain areas for further address. Although leaders understand their roles and responsibilities, the pace of improvement is not yet quick enough because expectations are not high enough. Leaders do not fully appreciate what constitutes good, or better, practice in their areas. They have too little management time to review the quality of the school's provision and to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions. Nevertheless, the monitoring of teaching has led to professional development which has started to raise the quality of teaching and the success of this is contributing to the rising trend in progress and outcomes for pupils. Where actions have been prioritised, there is clear evidence of impact, for example in the improvements to reading and writing and mathematics across the school, the changes to curriculum provision and the redeployment of roles and responsibilities. Action plans identify further focus upon improvements to reading and writing and the development of a skills-based curriculum. Overall, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve.

The present curriculum is satisfactory. It is planned with a balance between subjects but in practice it is not always providing sufficient breadth and challenge especially when worksheets are used which reduce opportunities for independent investigation and creativity. There are clear strengths in music and in sport which promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils enjoy opportunities to be responsible and happily take up position on the school council and as monitors. The school plays a central role in the locality and is well supported by the community. Links with feeder secondary schools are successful ensuring confident transition of pupils as they move to the next stage in their education.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and many governors take the opportunity to visit, and work on a voluntary basis. It has worked successfully with the headteacher and other staff to promote a happy and caring school and is aware of the need to increase progress and improve attainment. Close attention is given to safeguarding and ensuring that requirements are met; therefore, pupils learn and work together safely. All leaders and the governing body are prompted by a commitment to tackle discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity. Leaders have ensured that gaps in performance between the school and the national average have narrowed in core subjects..



## 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.
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.**



26 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Butterknowle Primary School, Bishop Auckland – DL13 5PB**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. It was lovely to talk with you and thank you for completing the questionnaires. You go to a satisfactory school where your teachers work hard to help you to feel safe and happy. I was extremely impressed by your high attendance and your good behaviour. Your parents and carers feel that the school looks after you well and I agree with them. You have good relationships with your teachers and each other. This means that your school has a warm and harmonious atmosphere.

I saw that you had good attitudes to work and you try hard to please your teachers. I could see that you enjoy learning most when you are actively involved in your learning. Your experiences with visitors and visits, such as to local mines and France, help you to increase your knowledge and understanding. I believe that you could achieve higher attainment in your reading writing and mathematics if your teachers could help you more. I would like them to make sure that you always make good progress by making sure that tasks are more practical and challenge your individual needs better, giving you more opportunity to use your English and mathematical skills in other subjects. I have asked teachers to help you in their marking of your work: provide you with more information about what you have done well, what you need to learn next and give you more opportunities to correct and improve work. I would like leaders in your school to have more time to carry out their roles.

I hope that you continue to enjoy learning and to try your very best in future.

Yours sincerely

Kate Pringle  
Lead inspector

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