

Burnside Primary School

Brinkburn Crescent, Houghton-le Spring, DH4 5HB

Inspection dates

16–17 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership at all levels has been very successful in improving the quality of teaching, and consequently, pupils' achievement, since the last inspection. The school continues to improve.
- The dynamic headteacher, together with highly competent governors and a strong senior team, has helped create a positive and caring ethos at the school. Staff and pupils told inspectors how proud they are of the school.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for improvement very well. Information about the progress pupils make is precise, and helps teachers to support individual pupils. This also allows the leaders to support all staff to improve their teaching.
- The curriculum is excellent. The school offers a wide range of opportunities to pupils.
- Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and well mannered. They are respectful towards adults and to each other.
- Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Good teaching means that the majority of pupils of all abilities and groups make at least good progress. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is outstanding over time.
- Teachers plan lessons to make sure all pupils are given work that gets the best out of them.
- From starting points that are generally below those found typical for their age, over time pupils achieve well to reach standards that are average, and often above average by the time they leave Year 6. Standards reached in writing and mathematics are particularly strong.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive.
- Children's learning gets off to a very good start in the Early Years. They make good progress and are prepared well for their learning in Year 1, especially when they have needed to catch up from lower starting points.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in reading are not as high as in writing and mathematics.
- In some classes, expectations are not quite high enough, and fussy behaviour slows learning.
- The quality of marking is not consistently high enough across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were held jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed groups of pupils working with teaching assistants and listened to some pupils reading from different year groups. They talked with pupils in lessons and looked at work in their books. Inspectors talked with two specific groups of pupils about life at school, and the work they were doing.
- Meetings were held with three members of the governing body, as well as teaching staff, including middle and senior leaders. Discussions were held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took into account the school's staff questionnaires and spoke with parents about their views of the school. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to be available for inspectors to take into account.
- Inspectors observed the overall work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data about pupils' current progress. They also studied documents relating to safeguarding, governance, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also looked at a range of other evidence, including school displays, the school's website and evidence representing the school's wider achievements beyond the classroom.

Inspection team

Michael Wardle, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicola Nelson-Taylor

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Burnside Primary School is a smaller than average size primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The number of pupils who start school at times other than the beginning of the year or the beginning of the Reception Year is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the time of the last inspection, a full restructuring of the senior leadership team has taken place.
- The school has the Healthy School's status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to raise pupils' achievement further, especially in reading by:
 - widening the choice of texts and books within the school so that pupils read for pleasure more often
 - asking pupils searching questions about their understanding when they are reading
 - ensuring that the marking of pupils' work always helps them to improve their work
 - stopping any fussy behaviour which sometimes slows the rate of learning in a few classes.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the school is inspirational. The dynamic headteacher, together with the senior team and governing body provide strong leadership. Everyone wants to do their best in the school. As a result, the quality of teaching, the progress of pupils and attendance are at least good and continue to improve. However, leaders have not yet had a sustained impact on standards in reading. Improvements in standards reached by the most able pupils are recent and not yet sustained. For these reasons, leadership and management are judged good rather than outstanding.
- The way in which the school uses information about the progress pupils are making to help it plan for further improvements is excellent. Staff know which pupils are in danger of falling behind, and extra help is given to them. The school has a thorough and detailed understanding of its strengths and areas for development.
- Senior leaders have used procedures to check the performance of staff and the appraisal process successfully to challenge areas of underperformance. As a result, teachers currently in the school meet the Teachers Standards comfortably. Training provided for teachers to help them continue developing their skills is linked directly to performance management.
- The curriculum is outstanding. A wide variety of exciting themes is helping to spark a love of learning amongst pupils. Extra-curricular programmes, including those supported by the primary sports funding, are helping pupils develop healthy lifestyles and to keep fit. This funding is used well. During the inspection, African drumming workshops were on offer.
- The development of literacy and numeracy across all subjects is thorough. Pupils' wider development is encouraged by themes which encourage their spiritual, moral and social development. Values of tolerance, respect and inclusion are woven into lessons and teaching programmes. The quality of the curriculum is one of the reasons that standards continue to rise.
- The capacity of the school to make further improvements is good, and this is due, in part, to the track record that school leaders now have in improving provision.
- The local authority and other improvement partners ensure that the school is given the support it needs.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils are safe at school are thorough and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well informed about the school's performance and the quality of teaching. Governors receive information from the headteacher and from their own visits to the school. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and guide the school in its next steps. They challenge school leadership where needed. For example, they ensure that procedures to check the performance of staff are used to link the quality of work and pay progression. They have a good understanding of the school's finances in relation to the use of the pupil premium and primary sports funding. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements. The governing body is committed to its own development and training, and has altered its structure to have even greater impact on the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school to work and spending time with their friends. In lessons, they are eager to learn and participate well in group work and whole-class activities.
- Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered and are welcoming to visitors. They are courteous to each other and to other adults.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying. They report that unkind behaviour is rare and that any instances are quickly resolved. They say that they feel confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns, or they can use the 'worry-boxes' to flag up any concerns to a teacher.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to develop as responsible individuals. There is an active school council, which recently led to the development of the new library, which several pupils described as 'inspirational'. There are sports captains who help to develop healthy lifestyles amongst the pupils. Recently, the school council organised a 'wig day' to raise money for a cancer charity.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel cared for by adults. They mentioned recent work in school linked to internet safety and healthy eating, for example, the 'Grab 5' initiative at lunchtime. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were out in the community learning about road safety.

- Attendance is in line with the national average and continues to improve. The school's work to reduce the number of persistent absences and to improve attendance has been effective.
- Consistent behaviour management and the application of the behaviour policy has made a strong contribution to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. However, on occasion, fussy behaviour by some of the pupils and a lack of focus slow their learning.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils do well because teaching over time is good. Some teaching is outstanding. Pupils say that they enjoy their lessons and learn well and inspectors agree with this view.
- Teachers make clear to the pupils what they are going to learn, and they plan lessons to make sure that pupils are given work that gets the best out of them. As a result, the majority of pupils learn quickly. This, combined with the pupils' positive attitudes to learning, creates an atmosphere where pupils make progress and get on with their work.
- Some teaching is inspirational. In a Year 1 lesson, the joy on the faces of the pupils as they were doing a penguin march was clearly visible. Pupils then produced stories about what they would take to the Antarctic and this work challenged them and helped them to improve their writing skills. In a Year 6 geography lesson, pupils compared and contrasted the Rio carnival with the local Houghton Feast, and showed a deep understanding of these concepts, together with local traditions. Their literacy skills developed well in this lesson. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils developed the skill of using evidence from a text to describe characters extremely well.
- Sometimes, fussy behaviour slows learning in some classes. Marking often helps pupils see how to move forward in their learning but this is not consistent across the school. Pupils' reading is developing well but there are too few opportunities for pupils to choose their own preferred texts and to read for pleasure. Sometimes questions asked of pupils when discussing their reading are not sufficiently searching.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and work alongside pupils in lessons, or with small groups of pupils. They provide good and often outstanding support for pupils, either those who are the most able, who benefit from further challenge, or for those with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are well briefed by the class teachers, and contribute to the progress pupils make.
- Information about pupils' prior learning is very well used to target pupils' needs and to change the structure of classes and groups. The range of themes and topics in the curriculum to inspire pupils' learning is excellent.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Standards are rising across all year groups as pupils make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in writing and mathematics are higher than those in reading. Pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 well prepared for the next stage of their education, including the most able pupils who now reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The above average number of pupils joining the school other than at the normal September start make good progress from their starting points.
- At Key Stage 1, there is an improving trend in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are in line with those nationally, and current school data indicate that standards are continuing to rise.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) is good, and this has had a positive impact on the proportion of pupils reaching the national standard in the phonics test, at the end of Year 1 which is now in line with the national average. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher helped pupils understand how certain letters and sounds link together, and these lower ability pupils made excellent progress in their understanding.
- Pupils build on these firm foundations and continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2, where their progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6 because of outstanding teaching over time.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Many make outstanding progress. This is due to the planning of work which meets their needs and the skilful guidance they receive from support staff.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good and often outstanding progress. The progress they make from their starting points is the same as other non-disadvantaged pupils in the school and the standards they reach are approximately one term behind. This gap is closing.
- The most able pupils make good progress overall. Actions taken by the school have led to improvements

in the progress they make in writing, reading and mathematics.

- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils are taught well how to link letters to sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. The school has correctly identified standards in reading as a priority. The school's recent work developing the library facility is appreciated by the pupils.

The early years provision

is good

- A large proportion of children join the Nursery class with skills that are below those typically found for their age. Thanks to very strong provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the vast majority of these children are ready for learning in Year 1, having reached or exceeded goals and targets which show that they have skills that are typical for their age. They have made rapid progress and any gaps in their skills have been largely addressed.
- The early years provision meets the needs of all the children well. Where children need more support in their understanding of sounds, words and their communication skills, teachers and other adults shape tasks to help them improve. Where children have weaker mathematical skills, they are encouraged to develop these further. Children with disabilities and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the extra support they receive. As a result, children are talkative and able to express themselves well.
- Children are safe and cared for well. Policies and procedures for keeping them safe are strong.
- The school makes a concerted effort to involve parents. During the inspection, a teacher was showing parents how phonics is taught so that they can help their children at home. This was appreciated by the parents who attended.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Teachers and other adults guide children in their learning, and ensure that all areas of their learning are developed. They skilfully observe the children and help them move on in their understanding of the world and in their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children were observed to be happy and courteous to one another, taking turns and sharing equipment and toys. Their confidence is developing, and their physical and emotional health improving. The school provides well for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. One child was heard to shout 'I get it' when he was practising letter writing with a teacher, and was praised accordingly. Provision in the early years is good.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	108823
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	442214

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marjorie Thomas
Headteacher	Tracey Pizl
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2012
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