



Buckton Vale Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106191
LEA Tameside
Inspection number 277505
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr John Atkinson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Swallow Lane
School category	Community		Carrbrook
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 3NU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01457 833102
Number on roll	244	Fax number	01457 833102
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs S Goddard
Date of previous inspection	22 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs A Bowles

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4 to 11	16 May 2006 - 17 May 2006	277505

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school. The pupils, who are all of white British heritage, come from the immediate area. Most children join the school in the Reception year and have attended a local nursery before starting. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average at about one in ten. A lower than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD), but there is a higher than average percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Many pupils are taught in mixed age classes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection team agrees with the school's evaluation that this is a good school because it is well led, pupils make good progress and it meets the needs of all. Pupils' achievements are good. The school is highly valued by parents; as one parent said 'it ensures that the individual child's needs, whether social or academic, are fully developed'. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and children get a good start to their education. However, the outdoor provision is inadequate and insufficient opportunities are provided for structured play. By Year 6, pupils reach standards that are in line with the national average but, since they were achieving below average levels when they started school, this represents good progress. They achieve well because teaching is good and the expertise of teaching assistants is invaluable in ensuring the progress of pupils with LDD and other targeted groups. Although teachers set targets for pupils in individual subjects, pupils are insufficiently involved in assessing their own work and progress.

The good curriculum is enriched with extensive opportunities and results in pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development being good. Pupils therefore enjoy coming to school, are confident and exceptionally well behaved with a keen desire to learn. The school is very inclusive and provides well for pupils with a range of significant learning difficulties.

The school is well led by the headteacher who has a good understanding of its strengths and areas for development through rigorous monitoring. However, the headteacher has recently carried a heavy burden in leading the school because of staff changes and the restructuring of staff roles and responsibilities but a new leadership team is now in place. The school has a good capacity to improve and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that the outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage is adequate and that there are sufficient opportunities for structured play.
- Involve pupils in judging their own progress towards their targets.
- Involve the new leadership team in directly monitoring the performance of all aspects of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. The school judges achievement and standards to be satisfactory but because of the progress the pupils make the inspection team judges it to be better. Children enter the Reception class with standards below those expected for their age and make good progress because staff build well on their positive attitudes towards learning. Adult led activities are taught well and children's communication and mathematical skills are quickly developed but they make less progress in their physical

and creative development because of the limitations of the outdoor provision. Most children achieve below the expectations for their age before joining Year 1, with a minority exceeding them. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading and writing, although no pupil reached the higher level in writing in 2005. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English and mathematics are average and in science are above average; this demonstrates good progress, particularly for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school sets and reaches challenging targets for its pupils because teaching is good and pupils with learning difficulties receive very good levels of individual support. Pupils' standards and achievement in writing are improving at a good pace because of recent action taken to address weaknesses.

Pupils make good progress in other subjects of the curriculum, especially in the development of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills and their sporting skills, with many pupils competing successfully in football, netball, swimming and cross country competitions.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and feel part of a safe and secure community. Behaviour is outstanding with pupils being polite and sensitive to each other. A good attitude towards learning is evident throughout the school. Pupils work hard and concentrate well in lessons. Staff praise their efforts and consequently raise pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to develop skills for later life by working together, sharing ideas or resources and showing care and consideration for each other. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy coming to school and parents and pupils fully recognise the importance of attendance and punctuality. There is a thriving Eco-Committee that highlights the importance of the national and local environment and how pupils can make a contribution to their community. Older pupils recently undertook an R.S.P.B. bird watch aimed at monitoring and identifying local species. Pupils are made aware of the importance of developing a healthy lifestyle through a healthy diet and regular exercise. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a growing awareness of other cultures and the multicultural society, but need to develop this further. This is being helped by the school's organisation of a joint project in music and

dance with a local school that provides pupils with insights into different cultures.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning is thorough and meets the needs of all pupils. Teachers have high expectations. As a result, pupils are easily engaged in tasks, have positive attitudes to learning and show good levels of

concentration. Most teachers use ICT effectively and make learning interesting, enjoyable and more easily understood. Interactive whiteboards are a basic tool for teaching in all classrooms and pupils respond with enthusiasm and confidence when learning is presented this way. More use could be made of the facilities in increasing the pace of some of the teaching.

Teachers challenge pupils well through skilful questioning. This has a very positive impact on pupils' speaking and listening skills and leads to high levels of participation with pupils explaining their views and justifying their answers. Teachers and teaching assistants establish a positive learning climate where pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, feel well supported and challenged. A particular strength is the teamwork of teachers and teaching assistants who work seamlessly in ensuring that pupils make good progress in lessons. However, pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a rich and varied curriculum which meets the needs of its pupils. The work of the school is enriched by extra-curricular activities including local and residential visits. For example, a visit to water treatment works, as part of the school's environmental studies curriculum, fostered pupils' understanding of their local community. The school is part of the Healthy Schools Award Scheme and pupils are aware of how to make healthy lifestyle choices. The good range of available sporting opportunities enhances pupils' levels of fitness.

The school has invested heavily in ICT and pupils' skills have improved as a result. There are increasingly good links between the learning in different subjects but more could be done to reinforce writing skills across subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy the greater use of drama in English lessons. The school provides very well for its pupils with LDD by providing individual work programmes that are regularly reviewed and adjusted and ensure good outcomes. The school provides after school care which is highly valued by parents and pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils work in a secure and happy environment. They settle quickly into the school with a very caring and supportive staff who meet their needs. Good behaviour is encouraged and rewarded in weekly assemblies. Most parents have a high regard for the care the school provides and are pleased with their child's progress. Careful monitoring of pupils' work and progress ensures that the curriculum is well matched to the needs of individuals and teachers are fully aware of the targets that have been set. However, pupils are not sufficiently involved in assessing their own work and progress. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place. Staff provide good support within the classrooms and during lunchtimes. The school makes very effective use of a wide range of agencies to provide additional support for pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities, ensuring that pupils at risk are identified early and their needs are met.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school, including governance, are good. The headteacher provides good leadership in setting out a clear vision for the school, identifying its priorities for development and working tirelessly in the drive to raise achievement. This has been a heavy burden in recent years because of staff changes and the restructuring of roles and responsibilities of the staff. A new leadership team is now in place that is ready to share the leadership responsibilities of the school. The monitoring of all aspects of the school's work is thorough and leads to an open and honest climate where strengths and areas for development are accurately identified. The school leadership engages effectively with parents and pupils and regards their involvement and support as key to ensuring the continuing success of the school. The headteacher, staff and governors share a very strong commitment to doing the best for all pupils and the inclusiveness of the school is good and a significant strength. This strong commitment is the driving force behind a school which enables pupils to make good progress both academically and in their personal development. The governing body is involved in the work of the school and actively monitors the quality of provision. The governing body gives good strategic support to the leadership in school, ensuring that its development is well planned and financially secure. The outcome is a school with a clear sense of purpose and a good capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Mr Rigby and I really enjoyed the two days that we recently spent in your school. Thank you for making us welcome and sharing your opinions about the school. We hope the changes that are going to be made to your school building will give you more space to learn in. We agree with your views that you go to a good school because of the many strengths it has.

- The staff and the pupils get on really well and adults always want you to do your best.
- They expect you to behave well and work hard - and we were very impressed with how well you behave, how polite you are and how hard you work.
- You have many opportunities to do exciting things after school in clubs, drama and sporting activities.
- The teachers and teaching assistants work hard to help you to do better in your work.
- The headteacher works non-stop to plan ways to make school better for you.

We had a long chat with the headteacher and other staff and we agreed that you could do even better if:

- there was better outdoor play provision for the younger children in reception
- you were involved in checking your own work and working out what you needed to do to improve.

We know how hard you work at Buckton Vale School and if you give your very best in every lesson then you will make really good progress and the school and your parents will have much to be proud of.