



# Butterknowle Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114102  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279314  
**Inspection dates** 7 March 2006 to 8 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Clive Davies

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Butterknowle
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bishop Auckland
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		County Durham DL13 5PB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 718369
<b>Number on roll</b>	54	<b>Fax number</b>	01388 718369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Jeanette Newell
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Paul Ruane

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 March 2006 - 8 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279314
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 one additional inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Butterknowle is a small primary school, situated in a village on the outskirts of Bishop Auckland. It serves a mixed community within an isolated rural setting. The number of children entitled to free school meals is about the same as the national average and a third of the children are recognised as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The children are divided into three mixed-aged classes. Most children start school with personal and academic skills that are below average for their age.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Butterknowle provides a satisfactory standard of education for its children. This reflects the school's own view of its effectiveness. The leadership and management have used good methods to identify many of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, many new initiatives are at early stages of implementation and are just beginning to have the necessary impact on standards. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and is in a position to continue to improve over the next few years. It provides satisfactory value for money.

Most children achieve satisfactorily, although those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do slightly better because of the good support provided for them. A small group of children in Years 3 and 4 have negative attitudes to learning and underachieve. Standards fluctuate from year to year between below average and well above average. Many children attained above the nationally expected level in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 and overall standards were above average. The school has accurately identified children's spoken English as an area for continued development. Standards in writing are adversely affected by the narrow use of descriptive language, which is attributable to children's limited spoken vocabulary.

Teaching is satisfactory but there is a lack of consistency in applying behaviour management strategies, resulting in a few children in Years 3 and 4 making unsatisfactory progress in lessons. Throughout the school, assessment information is not being consistently used to set challenging targets. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities and visits organised for different classes. Good use is made of children's literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all areas of learning. However, not enough is done to involve children in investigative and problem solving work. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good, with particular strengths in the way children's needs are identified early and specialist support provided to help individuals. By the end of Reception, children's attainment is broadly in line with that expected nationally for children this age.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, but attendance is unsatisfactory. Every care is taken to ensure that children feel safe and participate in physical activities on a regular basis. Good links with specialist staff and outside agencies ensure children's specific learning needs are met well.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Apply effective methods to deal with the negative attitudes of a few children in Years 3 and 4 so that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress in lessons.
- Strengthen the attention given to increasing the range of descriptive words used by children in everyday work in order to raise standards in writing.
- Ensure that assessment information is used more effectively to set challenging targets so all pupils do as well as they can.
- Provide children with more opportunities to make decisions through investigative work and to solve problems.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children from different backgrounds and abilities achieve satisfactorily in all subjects. However, in Years 3 and 4, a few children have negative attitudes to learning and underachieve. Children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. This matches the school's view of children's achievement.

Although a number of children are bright when they first start school, most children display personal and academic skill levels that are below those expected for their age. Communication and social skills are particularly weak. Effective assessment of needs combined with good teaching helps all children make good progress and achieve well in their first year at school. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children's attainment is broadly in line with that expected nationally.

Currently, in Years 1 and 2, children make satisfactory progress in lessons. Although the last few years' national test results for 7 year olds have been below the national average, standards are improving. Despite attempts to improve children's oral language, a lack of confidence in using descriptive language is limiting children's achievement in writing. Progress between Years 3 and 6 is more varied, with satisfactory progress being made by most in Years 3 and 4 being followed by good progress in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are above average, with more than half the children attaining a level above that expected for pupils this age.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Children's personal development and well-being are satisfactory. The school believes these areas to be good; however, a small number of children in Years 3 and 4 have negative attitudes to learning. Occasionally, this small group adversely influences the attitudes of others in lessons. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is satisfactory, with the school having made many efforts to help children understand about their responsibility for living in a multi-cultural society.

In the Foundation Stage, staff respond to children's personal needs and ensure that they are well supported and help them settle into daily routines. Throughout the school, most children enjoy coming to school and the vast majority display enthusiasm for learning. However, although attendance is improving, it remains below the national average. Staff work hard to create a calm and safe environment where children can learn. Through local schemes, such as the Durham anti-bullying initiative, the school ensures that children understand about how to deal with incidents of bullying and racism. Children know who to talk to if they are unhappy and state that they believe their school to be a safe place.

Children know about healthy living and different ways to lead a healthy lifestyle. The breakfast club provides good opportunities for children to have a positive start to their school day and this is particularly popular with children and parents. Although the newly formed school council helps children have a say about day to day running of

the school, not enough is done to help children make decisions about their own learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Inspectors agree with the school that teaching and learning are satisfactory.

There has been good attention to managing the behaviour of difficult children in the recent past. This has been successful in Reception, Years 1 and 2, and Years 5 and 6, where the most experienced teachers work. However, there is ineffective management of a few children in Years 3 and 4. Despite good steps already been taken to improve children's spoken English, staff recognise there is more to be done in this area. The strong emphasis on making learning enjoyable ensures that children are eager to learn, and the majority work hard. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because staff are particularly skilled in meeting their needs. The school is only making limited use of assessment to help set targets to help children achieve to their full potential. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. An effective range of well planned practical activities cover all areas of learning, with an appropriate emphasis on developing children's social skills and spoken English.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum, which meets all statutory requirements, is satisfactory. It is well planned and enriched to meet children's different needs and interests through a good range of varied and practical learning activities. Basic skills are taught well and children use them across the curriculum; for example, by using different ways of writing to help develop understanding in history and science. However, more could be done to provide children with opportunities to solve problems and make decisions through investigative work. Children use computers competently as a learning tool in many subjects. Effectively planned activities for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities contribute to their good progress. A range of after-school and lunchtime clubs, visits and a residential experience enriches the curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on art and design and physical education. All children enjoy learning French. The school regularly participates in local festivals and community events.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Although the school judged this area as good, inspectors found the school provides a satisfactory level of care, support and guidance for all its pupils. Procedures for child protection and risk assessments are in place. Good links with specialist staff and outside agencies ensure children's particular needs are met well. Procedures for improving

attendance are satisfactory and include links with the education welfare service and a system of rewarding good attendance. However, the initial link with the local authority's behaviour support staff is yet to make a difference to the attitudes of a few children who misbehave in Years 3 and 4. Parents generally feel confident about approaching the school, and are happy with the care given to their children. Most children feel safe and happy in school, but are unhappy with the way a few children disrupt learning for others in Years 3 and 4. The way the progress of all groups of children is tracked and monitored is satisfactory. However, the system is in its infancy and more needs to be done to link progress with setting challenging targets for pupils to attain.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory, which agrees with the school's view. The headteacher is well respected by parents, although a few believe more could be done to improve the quality of children's behaviour. Most staff are clear about what needs to be done to help children achieve their full potential. However, there is a lack of consistency in applying agreed procedures such as behaviour management strategies and procedures for tracking pupils' progress.

The school's self-evaluation is of good quality and effective attention is given to what has been learnt about the school's performance. Action has been taken on issues such as behaviour management and improving children's spoken English. However, the impact of this action has only been partially successful to date. Tracking the progress of individual children is at an early stage of implementation and therefore the use of assessment information is only starting to make an impact on children's achievement.

Governance is satisfactory. The governors meet their statutory duties and know the school well. They support and challenge the school appropriately and take full advantage of the range of skills within the governing body in order to increase its effectiveness. They have been heavily involved in aspects related to school premises, finance and staffing, but less so in relation to raising standards.

**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](http://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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Butterknowle Primary School

Butterknowle

Bishop Auckland

County Durham DL13 5PB

8 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when I visited your school. I enjoyed watching you learn and talking to you. I am delighted to learn that so many of you enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure when you are there. During my visit I was watching to see how well you behaved. I appreciated the honesty of those who told me that you are very disappointed in the few in Years 3 and 4 who clearly do not behave well enough. I have asked your teachers to give a great deal of attention to help those children to think more carefully about their behaviour and let others get on with their learning. I know that many of you can help by showing how pleased you are when their behaviour improves.

There are many things your school does well, here are some of them:

many who attend regularly do very well in tests, especially at the end of Year 6

those of you who find learning difficult are well supported and therefore do well in lessons

you use your literacy and ICT skills well in other subjects, such as history and science

your teachers try to make learning interesting by providing many extra activities for you, such as clubs and visits

because your health and safety matters to your teachers, you learn about the benefits of eating a healthy meal and why it is important that no one feels unhappy at your school.

Apart from asking your teachers to help children whose attitudes are poor to behave better, I have asked if teachers could work with you to improve the following:

help you to use a more interesting range of words in your writing

give you more information about what you need to do next to improve your work

to help you make more decisions for yourselves in your work and to solve more problems.

Finally, I was very impressed by the amount of exercise you take and how you enjoy keeping healthy – keep it up!

Yours faithfully

Clive Davies  
Lead inspector