



Burnley Casterton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119219
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280494
Inspection dates 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005
Reporting inspector Gordon Alston

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Thames Avenue
School category	Community		Burnley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lancashire, BB10 2PZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 435657
Number on roll	281	Fax number	01282 441352
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Martin Smith
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Maggie Crooks

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	Inspection number 280494
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Casterton is a primary school serving an area of significant social deprivation in Burnley in Lancashire. The 281 pupils in the school cover the full range of abilities. Many enter the school with skills below those expected for their age, especially in language. Around one third of them receive free school meals, and the proportion who have special educational needs is above average. Only a small number of pupils do not have English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's view of itself. This is a good school which is valued by parents, pupils and the local community. Pupils achieve well and reach average standards from a low starting point. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. The high quality of care and support provided by the school, the effective teaching and the many enrichment activities provided, all lead to pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils enjoy their school and are strongly encouraged to think for themselves and to have their say. Leadership and management are good and the leadership of the headteacher is very effective in her relentless drive for improvement. The management of subjects is good. Partnerships are excellent. Governors discharge their responsibilities effectively, and the school gives good value for money. It has improved markedly since the last inspection, and is in a strong position to improve further. Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to implement the programmes in place to raise standards in English, particularly in reading.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to use computers in all subjects.
- Extend the already effective systems of target setting to include the pupils' personal development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. From their low starting point in the Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress, but not all reach the learning goals expected by the end of the Reception year. Pupils continue to make good progress towards the challenging targets set for them in national tests and standards have been steadily improving. As they move through Years 3 to 6 pupils make increasingly good gains in writing and mathematics but less so in reading because pupils spend less time reading than in writing. The school knows this and is taking action to put it right. Despite the weakness in reading, overall standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to national averages at the end of Year 6. Standards in ICT are broadly average for their age and this is an improvement since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory.

No group is underachieving and the large number of pupils who have learning difficulties make good progress. The few pupils whose home language is not English also do equally well as other pupils because of the effective help they get from a very conscientious and knowledgeable team of support staff. As a result of this support these pupils take part fully in lessons.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding and has greatly improved since the last inspection. Pupils enjoy coming to school and find the varied range of activities provided for them interesting and fun. They work hard and try to do their best in lessons and their behaviour is outstanding. Pupils understand the class and school rules very well, show care and consideration for each other and respect for their surroundings. Pupils work and play very well together and willingly accept responsibility. School council members speak with pride and enthusiasm about their work in raising money to support different projects, especially the development of the outside area and provision of playtime equipment. They know that what they say will be valued and acted upon where possible. They show a good and developing awareness of how to become good citizens.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstandingly good. Spirituality is developed very well through assemblies and through different areas of the curriculum such as art and music. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on a range of issues and show respect for the values and beliefs of others. There is a strong focus on helping young children to understand their feelings. The school community is proud of its successes and the 'Golden Book' assemblies very effectively celebrate the good work and behaviour of pupils of all abilities. Pupils' understanding about living healthily, being safe and contributing to the community is impressive for their age. Attendance since the last inspection is much improved and is now good. Pupils' good progress in most key skills prepares them well for the next stages in their education and life in the wider world.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teaching and learning are good and account for pupils' good progress and excellent attitudes to their work. It is outstanding in the Foundation stage and this is why the pupils get off to such a good start. Teachers work hard to ensure that their lessons are consistently good. Training has enabled them to be more confident in their subject knowledge and this is reflected in their teaching. A strong belief that all pupils will succeed motivates pupils.

Pupils say that lessons are fun. In a Year 6 lesson there was a buzz of interest and enthusiasm as pupils explored their ideas of what things most helped them to learn a new song. Rigorous testing and recording of pupils' achievement in lessons help teachers plan interesting tasks that stretch and challenge all pupils without inhibiting them. Pupils are aware of their responsibility in their own learning and they are encouraged to work independently, which they do very well. 'We always have to try

to do our best,' one pupil commented as he sweated over the questions he might use in his introduction to his John Lennon biography, hinting at the teachers' high expectations.

Well-written individual plans, with clear targets for pupils with learning difficulties, are used well to set tasks for these pupils. These, alongside the energetic contribution of well-prepared and conscientious support staff, ensure that the teaching of these pupils is as effective as that for other pupils.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school's curriculum meets the pupils' needs well and contributes to their good academic progress and excellent personal development. It provides pupils with a great many opportunities to develop skills through direct experiences. A large number of outside visits and visitors to school gives pupils excellent opportunities to learn. The school makes good use of pupil's literacy and numeracy skills to help their learning in other subjects. However, their ICT skills are not applied frequently or effectively enough in most curriculum subjects. The school takes great care to attend to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and of the few pupils whose home language is not English by providing additional support. Staff at all levels help raise pupils' awareness of the need to take regular exercise and encourage them to take up additional sporting activities after school. The school ensures that pupils are aware of the dangers of drugs misuse as this is a major concern of the local community.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The provision to secure the health, safety and protection of all pupils is outstanding and is reflected in the daily routines before and after school. Parents are pleased with the way that the school looks after their children and the very good programme for their personal development. 'This school really cares!' was a view echoed by many parents. Pupils say they feel safe and know that an adult will always listen to them if they feel unhappy.

Rigorous testing of children on entry gives the school a clear picture of their attainment, which is below average at that time. The reception staff use this information well to set challenging targets for young children and in checking regularly to ensure that the children make the progress they should. In their personal development pupils are given challenging targets and encouraged to try hard. This works very well but such good practice is not generally found in curriculum subjects and no clear individual targets are set help pupils to make progress in English and mathematics. For example, pupils do not know what level they should be trying to achieve in English and mathematics by the end of the year.

Pupils are very well prepared to start school, move from class to class and transfer to secondary schools. All staff are committed to promoting the health and safety of pupils. For example, the school has an extensive outdoor 'road system' in order to teach pupils road safety. Child protection procedures are very good, and the school is very clear about how to handle any issues that arise. There are no incidents of bullying or nastiness between pupils.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides creative and inspiring leadership. Her strong belief that all pupils should do well, both academically and in their personal development, is the driving force in a caring environment where pupils make good progress on all fronts. This belief pervades the school so that staff work with a common sense of purpose. Subject coordinators are very enthusiastic and successfully strive for improvement.

The school successfully evaluates its own performance and sees this as being central to improvement. For example, it has identified two areas linked to raising standards in reading and ICT and is carrying out clear and detailed action plans. All issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. The school seeks and heeds the views of parents and pupils. For example, their ideas have led to improvement in the learning environment, both inside and outside. Resources are used very efficiently to ensure that pupils make good progress and to secure good value for money. The school recognises the importance of strong links with parents to support its work and its success is reflected in the deservedly good reputation it has with parents and the community.

The governors fulfil their duties well and have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. Their regular visits enable them to know pupils and staff and to exploit their individual skills. For example, one governor supports ICT in the school through his technical knowledge.

Grade: 2

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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
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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?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	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

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5th October 2005

Dear Pupils

I am writing this letter after thinking about the two enjoyable days we spent in your school, and I want to thank you all so much for making the experience such a pleasurable one. We came to see how good your school is, and you had a very important role in this, just as much as your teachers had.

You did not let the school down in any way. In fact your friendliness, excellent behaviour and the way you get on so well with one another are a credit to you all. They helped us to judge just how good your school is in helping you to grow and learn.

Well, what did we think after those two days? I know your teachers were a little worried about inspectors coming, but we hope our report will help them feel that all the hard work they do is worthwhile. I always ask pupils their views of the school and one girl replied, 'It's good fun at school and everyone cares about how you feel'. She was right; your school is a good, caring school. You have a good team of adults led by a hard-working head teacher and everyone wants you to do as well as you can. Your teachers make learning interesting, push you to work hard and as a result you make good progress in lessons. They also arrange lots of visits for you to go on and visitors to talk to you. We were pleased to see how very hard you worked, but equally important was how very well everyone got on. We saw lots of pupils who had responsibilities and jobs to do, and who did them very well. We were very pleased to see all the clubs you can go to, and your good attendance. It is also good to see that you take regular exercise and that sport is important to you.

I'm sure your teachers always say 'This work is good but you could make it even better if you.....' Well this is what we are telling your school. For it to get even better, we want it to do three things:

to try to get standards even higher in reading

to give you more opportunities in lessons to use computers to help you learn in all the subjects you do. (I'm sure you will like this one!)

to tell you what targets you should reach by the end of each year in English and mathematics.

Finally, we would like to thank you again. I am sure if you and your teachers continue to work as hard as you did when we were in school, your school will continue to do well.

Gordon Alston

(Lead inspector)

Annex B