



Burnley Ightenhill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119264
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280507
Inspection dates 3 October 2005 to 4 October 2005
Reporting inspector John Heap

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Alder Street
School category	Community		Burnley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		BB12 6ED
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 428246
Number on roll	333	Fax number	01282 839938
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Frank Havard
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2003	Headteacher	Melanie Darcy

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 3 October 2005 - 4 October 2005	Inspection number 280507
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is large and located in a disadvantaged area. Very few children are from minority ethnic backgrounds and they all speak English. A below average number of children have learning disabilities and difficulties but the proportion with a Statement of Special Educational Need is well above average. The school has a Special Educational Resource Facility which draws children from a wider area than the locality. At the time of the last inspection the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. Since that time, the leadership and management of the school have changed frequently.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies.

Inspectors judge the school to be satisfactory. The school's judgement about its overall effectiveness is good. This is more a correct reflection of the good progress they have made since the last inspection rather than its present level of effectiveness, overall. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Children benefit from a wide range of initiatives to include them in all that the school is doing. The school has successfully tackled: most of the underachievement shown then by the higher attaining children; the weak management systems and procedures; and shortcomings in the planning of the curriculum. The quality of assessment and marking has improved and is still being developed. These improvements have been brought about through the very strong partnership between the governing body, successive managers and local authority personnel. The school is well placed to continue improving.

Children's academic achievement and personal development are satisfactory. Children in the Reception Year make good progress and enter Year 1 with broadly average standards. This good start enables them to make satisfactory progress in the infants and juniors. As a result, standards in Year 6 are above average in reading, mathematics and science; and too low for the higher attaining children in writing.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there are strengths in the Special Educational Resource Facility and in the reception class. Good monitoring procedures have ensured that the acting headteacher has a clear and accurate view of teaching quality. The school has done well to drive improvement at a time when the leadership and management have been highly unstable. Great credit is due to the joint actions of the school and local authority (LA).

What the school should do to improve further

Improve achievement and standards in writing, particularly for the higher attaining children, by:

- increasing the amount and quality of writing in all other subjects;
- making targets for improvement specific to individual children's needs; and
- improving marking so that it focuses clearly on individual writing targets and gives pupils clear guidance on how well they are moving towards them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that achievement and standards are satisfactory. Children enter the school with skills and aptitudes that are a little below average. They make good progress in the Reception Year because of the effective teaching and lively programme. Progress is steady through the infants and juniors. By Year 6, standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science and children meet challenging

targets. Higher attaining children are achieving more in mathematics and science than they were at the time of the last inspection. These successes are a great credit to the leadership and management; improvements in these subjects and in reading have come about because of the school's strong focus on developing them. Attainment in information and communication technology is average.

Standards in writing are below average. The school understands that standards in writing should be higher, particularly for the higher attaining children. Children do well when the writing task is a brief one. Their difficulties come when the writing needs to be longer. There are two main factors: they do not do enough writing in other subjects; and individual targets set for children are too general and the marking of their work does not focus clearly on those targets. Children with learning disabilities and those in minority groups make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that personal development and behaviour are satisfactory, with some good features. Children like their school very much and enjoy their lessons, particularly geography, art and design, mathematics and physical education. Good levels of attendance reflect their enjoyment of school. Older children are eager to act as playground 'buddies', fruit monitors and secretaries. As well as being members of the school council, children have productive experiences of working to improve their own community. Staff and children have collaborated effectively through the school council to improve behaviour by devising the school rules. One parent writes, "My son's role as school/class councillor has made him more aware of his behaviour and what is to be expected of him". Children comment that some pupils do not always behave as well as they should, but are confident that staff quickly resolve any problems. Consequently, they feel safe in school, a view shared by parents.

The school makes satisfactory provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all children. They value the reward system and their self-esteem grows when their achievements are celebrated. They are caring towards others, particularly the children from the Special Educational Resource Facility. The Healthy Fruit Scheme has been received enthusiastically and the pupils understand the need to be healthy and act safely. Most basic skills are well developed. Writing skills need further development if they are to contribute effectively to the children's future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspectors confirm the school's view that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The good quality monitoring by management and local authority officers has provided a clear and accurate picture of strengths and areas for development.

There are examples of good practice: teaching is effective in the Foundation Stage and provides the children with interesting learning experiences; and in the Special Education Resource Facility it is consistently good. There are some outstanding features, such as the way learning activities are very closely matched to the needs of each individual child.

Planning is much better than at the last inspection and teachers collaborate well so that children of the same age have equal access to the same programme. Good lessons are planned well, move along quickly and keep children interested and actively learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support children with learning disabilities.

Improving assessment systems are helping staff track children's progress and gather information to plan the next steps in learning. Targets are set but in writing they are not sufficiently specific to individual learning needs. Work is marked regularly but teachers' comments do not usually refer directly to children's targets or show them how they are progressing. Sometimes, children are given prepared answer sheets to complete and they lose an opportunity to develop their writing and plan their own responses.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree that the curriculum is satisfactory. The school has successfully improved the curriculum and it provides a broad and balanced programme. In the Foundation Stage, learning is promoted effectively by the well planned and lively activities. The curriculum for children in the Special Education Resource Facility is planned in collaboration with the Foundation Stage staff and meets their needs well. Work is suitably adapted to match the needs of children with learning disabilities. The highest attaining and most talented children are encouraged to participate in more challenging activities and extend their learning.

Children of all ages enjoy attending the extra-curricular activities the school provides, especially the sports clubs. The school is rightly very keen for all children to have the opportunity to join in these activities and some clubs are therefore held at lunchtimes. This enables younger children and those from the Special Educational Resource Facility to attend.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Overall, inspectors agree with the school that care, welfare and guidance are satisfactory. Procedures and practices for welfare and safety are good, including those for attendance and child protection. Liaison with outside agencies is strong. As a result, children are confident and happy and this is a source of satisfaction to their parents. Children who are identified as being vulnerable are monitored effectively. Their academic and social needs are met.

The school council is effective because it liaises well between management and pupils; and it consults on matters of school order and safety, such as rules for the playground.

The tracking and monitoring of academic achievements are sound. Assessment procedures cover all groups of children. As a result, teachers have an improving understanding of their pupils' progress. However, improvements are needed in target-setting for writing and in the quality of marking.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. Some parents are rightly concerned that the school has suffered a long period of instability and disruption. As one parent wrote, "Constant changes of head and the impact on the school staffing when teachers become acting or deputy heads is disruptive to the school". Nevertheless, the vast majority of parents who contacted inspectors rightly think the school is led and managed well.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and clear direction has been set in the face of very difficult circumstances. Procedures and practices for checking on the school's work have been improved to meet the various challenges confronting the school. The governing body is robust and benefits from strong and informed leadership from the chair. As a result, the school has continued to move forward at a time when there have been four headteachers in two years. Financial management is satisfactory and prudent decisions are made about spending. The school has effective procedures and practices for ensuring that it gets value for money in its purchasing of supplies and services.

This instability has been steadied by sensible decision-making, and by the timely intervention and considerable support of the local authority. The work of successive acting and associate headteachers has led to the school making good progress overall since the last inspection. As a result, the school is well placed to meet the needs of all its children and ensure that all benefit fully from what is on offer.

Subject leadership is sound. Staff are making satisfactory use of data to track children's progress. Action planning is reasonable and there is a greater emphasis on using the information from monitoring to support development. Morale is good and staff are keen to move forward.

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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?	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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	3	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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Burnley Ightenhill Primary School
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5 October 2005

Dear children

We thoroughly enjoyed being in your school this week. It has been a privilege and a pleasure for us to work with you and the adults. We were delighted that many of you wanted to talk to us and we were impressed by the courtesy and help you provided.

We particularly liked the way:

Mrs Darcy and her team have led and managed your improving school;

the results in national tests have improved, particularly for children reaching the higher levels in reading, mathematics and science in Year 6;

the school council talks to you about the ways the school can get better still and the way it takes your views to meetings with Mrs Darcy;

many of you help in the school such as by being playground 'buddies'. A friend on the playground is a great help and comfort to someone who is feeling lonely;

the school provides you with lots of activities outside lesson time;

you are finding out more about what you know and can do;

you nearly all behave well in classrooms and around the school.

We have asked your teachers to make some improvements in the way that you are taught writing. This is very important because you will need to have the very best skills when you go on to secondary school and, later, when you get a job.

We wish you well for the future and good luck to you all.

Yours sincerely

Mr Heap

(Lead inspector)

Annex B